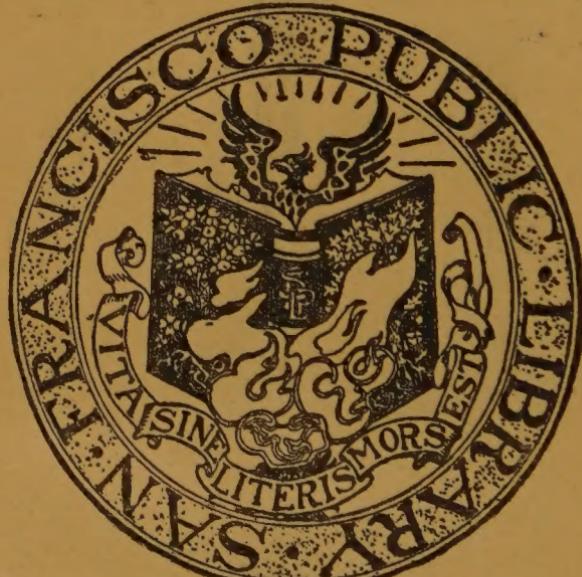


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JOHN WICLIF

AND HIS

ENGLISH PRECURSORS

BY

PROFESSOR LECHLER, D.D.

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LEIPSIC

*TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN
WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES*

BY

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IN THE PRUSSIAN STATES

VOL. I.

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

SCIENCE is an international good. It is not confined by territorial boundaries, nor restricted by the ties of nationality. Nowhere does it stand written that only an Englishman can suitably write the history of England or a portion of it. It may easily happen that a German may have access to sources of English history from which the Englishman may have less opportunity to draw. It is from such sources that I believe myself able to offer not a little which may serve to supplement and enrich, and even to correct, the knowledge which has hitherto been current respecting the history and the characteristic genius of Wiclid.

All the men whose Wiclid-researches have hitherto acquired importance and authority, have in every instance been able to bring to light, and make use of for the first time, fresh documentary materials. It was so with John Lewis in the last century, who wrote the first independent biography of Wiclid. The chief value of that book—a value still fully recognised at the present day—lies not in its style of execution, but purely in the mass of materials which it brought together and published. In the present century, Dr. Robert Vaughan,

by his works upon the same subject, increased our historical knowledge of Wiclit to such a degree, that these works have been everywhere recognised as authorities, and used as a storehouse of information. The chief distinction of these writings was the extensive use made in them, by quotation and otherwise, of Wiclit's manuscript Tracts and Sermons. More recently, at the suggestion of the late Professor Shirley, these English writings of the Reformer have been published by the Clarendon Press, which had already, in 1850, given to the world a model edition of the Wiclit Translation of the Bible. The *Select English Works of John Wiclit*, edited in excellent style by Thomas Arnold, M.A., of University College, Oxford, contains a complete collection of the Reformer's English sermons, and a selection of his English tracts, popular pieces, and fly-leaves—a service to literature and religious history which calls for the warmest acknowledgments.

It was as an integral part of the same projected collection of *Select Works of Wiclit*, that the author of the present work brought out in 1869 a critical edition of the *Trialogus*, upon the authority of a collation of four Vienna MSS. of the work, accompanied by the *Supplementum Trialogi*, which had never been in print. It was the treasures of the Imperial Library of Vienna which put him in a position to execute that critical task. When at the beginning of the 15th century the Wiclit spirit took so strong a hold of Bohemia and Moravia, Bohemian hands were busily employed through several decades of years in multi-

plying copies of the books, sermons, and tracts of the *Evangelical Doctor*. Hence there are still to be found at the present day, not only in Prague itself, but also in Vienna and Paris, and even in Stockholm, MSS. of Wiclit's works, of which little use has hitherto been made. In particular, the Imperial Library of Vienna, owing to the secularisation of the Bohemian monasteries under Joseph II., is in possession of nearly forty volumes, which consist either entirely or chiefly of unprinted Latin works of Wiclit, of which, in some instances, not a single copy is to be found in England. By the kind mediation of the Saxon Government with the Imperial Government of Austria, I obtained from the latter the leisurely and unrestricted use of all those volumes of the collection which I required, and which were sent to me from Vienna as I needed them with the utmost liberality—a gracious furtherance of literary labours, for which, I trust, I may be allowed in this place to express my most respectful and most sincere thanks.

When I compare the two groups of *Sources* which serve to elucidate the personality and the entire historical position of Wiclit, I come in sight of the fact that the English sermons and tracts most recently printed belong, almost without exception, to the four last years of his life (1381-1384). They serve, therefore, to throw upon his latest convictions and efforts—however comparatively well-known these were before—a still clearer and fuller documentary light. The Latin works, on the other hand, so far as they only exist

in MS., were for the most part written at earlier dates, some of them indeed going back as far as the year 1370. These latter, therefore, have a specially high value, because we learn from them the thoughts and doings of Wiclif during an earlier stadium of his life; and, what is most important of all, they open up to us a view of his gradual development—of the progress of his mind in insight and enlightenment.

I cannot allow the present opportunity to pass of expressing my conviction how much it is to be wished that several of these earlier Latin writings of Wiclif were printed and published. Not only would they be made thereby more accessible to learned investigators; they would also be secured against the possibility of destruction, in view of the fact that some of them continue to exist only in a single copy. It is alarming to think what an irreparable loss might be caused by fire in a library rich in manuscripts. Should the Clarendon Press determine to include in the series of the *Select Works* an additional number of Wiclif's Latin writings, I would, with all submission, advise that works of an earlier date than 1381 should be the first to be selected. Most of all, the publication of the *De Veritate Sanctae Scripturae* is to be recommended; and next to this a collection of forty Latin sermons, preserved in the Vienna MS. 3928, and which reflect an earlier stage of Wiclif's opinions. The book *De Ecclesia*—the best MS. of which is the Vienna MS. 1294,—and the *De Dominio Civilis*, would also be worthy of being sent to press.

In the summer of 1840, I studied in the University Library of Cambridge the MS. of *Repressor*—the interesting polemical treatise of the rationalising Bishop Pecock, directed against the Wyclifite “Biblemen” about the middle of the 15th century. Twenty years after I had made acquaintance with it, it was published by Babington. By that perusal I was conducted into the history of the Lollards; and from them I saw myself thrown back upon Wiclif himself. It was thus by a retrogressive movement that the present work gradually took shape, the main impulse to undertake it having come from my good fortune in obtaining access to the Vienna MSS. As I continued to be thus occupied with Wiclif's life and writings, my respect and love for the venerable man—“the evangelical doctor,” as his contemporaries were wont to call him—went on ever growing. He is truly, in more than one respect, a character of the genuine Protestant type, whose portraiture it may not be without use to freshen up again in true and vivid colours in the eyes of the present generation.

In the present English edition, several portions of the original work have been omitted which did not appear likely to interest English readers so much as what relates directly to England and Wiclif himself.

The Author can only congratulate himself that he has found in Professor Lorimer a translator who, along with a perfect acquaintance with German, combines so rich a knowledge of the subject, and, what is not the smallest requisite for the task, so enthusiastic a love for the

personality of Wiclit. He has given a special proof of his love to the subject of this book, and of his learned knowledge of it, in a number of "Additional Notes." In these, with the help of medieval records and chronicles which have appeared since the publication of the German original (1873), he has been able sometimes to confirm, and sometimes to correct, the investigations of the Author. And as, in my esteem, the truth is above all else, I am able, without jealousy, to rejoice in every rectification which the views I set forth may receive from later researches among documents which were not accessible to me at the time of my own investigations.

May the Father of Lights, from whom cometh down every good and perfect gift, be pleased to make His blessing rest upon this English edition of my work, to His own glory, to the furtherance of evangelical truth, and to the wellbeing of the Church of Jesus Christ.

GOTTHARD LECHLER.

LEIPZIG, 11th February 1878.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

PROFESSOR LECHLER's work is not only a Biography of Wiclit, but also a preliminary history of the Reformation ; beginning far back in the medieval centuries, and carried down along the parallel lines of the Lollards and the Hussites, to the first decades of the sixteenth century. The two volumes extend to 1400 closely printed pages ; and it was found impracticable to carry out the original idea of publishing a translation of the whole work.

My design was then reduced to the reproduction of the Biography, and of so much of the preliminary history as concerned Wiclit's English Precursors. From the English point of view, it seemed perfectly fitting that the life and teaching of Wiclit should be presented as a subject complete in itself, without implication with the general history of the Church, either earlier or later ; and it was found that a single preliminary chapter would suffice to communicate all that the Author had written respecting Grossetête, Occam, and the rest of Wiclit's forerunners upon English soil. Professor Lechler at once acceded to this reduced programme of the translation, and not only prepared for my use a new arrangement of the original text, so far as this was called for, but also made a

careful revision both of text and notes, for the present edition.

The whole original work is of much value and well worth translation, but its chief importance lies in the Biography of Wiclf himself. In the execution of this kernel portion of his work, the Author had the immense advantage of free and leisurely access to the Wiclf MSS. of the Imperial Library of Vienna; and he has used this advantage to the utmost, and with the best effect. Never before has the whole teaching of the reformer,—philosophical, theological, ethical, and ecclesiastical, been so copiously and accurately set forth; and never before has so large a mass of classified quotations from all his chief scientific writings been placed under the eyes of scholars.

It is a singular fact that 500 years should have passed away before it became possible to do this service of justice to the memory of so great a man—the very “Morning Star of the Reformation;” and it is much to be wished that the University of Oxford, Wiclf's *Alma Mater*, should complete the service, by carrying out to the full her own noble design, already considerably advanced, of a collection of the “Select Works” of Wiclf—in the direction of the suggestions offered by Professor Lechler in the foregoing Preface.

The Author has referred in his Preface in the kindest spirit to the “*Additional Notes*” which I have been able to append to several chapters of the first volume. It had occurred to me that it might be possible to

find some fresh collateral lights upon a medieval subject, in several volumes of the “Chronicles and Memorials” brought out under the superintendence of the Master of the Rolls, which had appeared since the publication of Professor Lechler’s work. The surmise was verified much beyond my hope. In particular, it is a great satisfaction to me that these sources supplied me with the materials of an argument to prove, with a high degree of probability, an unbroken connexion of Wiclif with Balliol College, from the date of his entrance at the University, down to his resignation of the Balliol Mastership. This satisfaction has been much enhanced by Professor Lechler’s concurrence in the same view, upon the ground of this fresh evidence; and it would be complete if I might hope to obtain also the concurrence of the eminent scholars who now preside over that illustrious seat of learning—one of whose chief historic distinctions must always be that it was Wiclif’s College.

THE TRANSLATOR.

ENGLISH PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE,
LONDON, *March 1878.*

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INTRODUCTION.

THERE now lies between the commencement of the Reformation and our own day an interval of 360 years, a period of time considerable enough to allow of our taking a tolerably free and comprehensive survey. We are thus placed in a position to embrace in one view the whole effects of the Reformation, in so far as these have as yet developed themselves; and it has also become possible for us to attain a right understanding of the conditions under which the movement took its rise, and of the manner in which its way was prepared in the preceding centuries.

Our power of insight, indeed, in this matter as in others, must have its limits. Beyond all doubt, a later time will here also command a wider horizon and gain deeper reaches of insight. For what the poet says of the past is not true of it in every respect—

“ Still stands the past for evermore.”

On the contrary, the image of the past is for ever shifting and changing with the conditions of the present in which it is reflected. “The living man, too, has his right:” he has a right to the inheritance of the generations which have gone before him; he has also the right to put the history of the past in relations to the present—to study it in connection with the events and the needs and the questions of his own time—and thereby to arrive at the true vision and under-

standing of it for himself. Only our own experience can give us the interpretation of history. As a general truth, the actual knowledge which we are able to acquire is commensurate with our experience, and the more thorough and comprehensive the experience which any man has acquired, so much the deeper and more correct is the understanding of the past which he is in a condition to attain.

On this ground the period of more than three centuries and a half which has elapsed since the commencement of the Reformation, both enables and calls us, in a much higher degree than the generations which have preceded us, to attain to a thorough understanding of its preliminary history, or the long series of events and transactions by which its advent was prepared. A beginning of such studies, indeed, was made as early as the sixteenth century; and even while the Reformation itself was still in progress, there were historical inquirers who cast back their eyes to men and religious brotherhoods of the past who appeared to bear some resemblance to the Reformers and Reformed Churches of their own generation. These excursions into comparative pre-Reformation history were of course of very different kinds, and issued in the most opposite results, according as they were undertaken by friends or foes of the Reformation itself.

When Luther received from the Utraquists of Bohemia one of Huss's writings, and studied it, he was lost in astonishment, for all at once the light dawned upon him that he and Staupitz and all the rest had been Hussites all this while, without being aware of the fact.¹ A few years later, he became acquainted with the writings of John Wessel, which filled him with sincere admiration of the man, and with a wondering joy; so much so that he felt himself strengthened as

Elijah was when it was revealed to him that he was not left alone, for there were 7000 men still living who had not bowed their knees to Baal. "If I had read Wessel before now my enemies might have thought that Luther had taken all his ideas from Wessel, so much are we of one mind."² At a later date the Reformer gave his judgment on the subject in a quieter tone, but not more correctly, when he remarked that "Wiclit and Huss had attacked the life of the Church under the Papacy, whereas he fought not so much against the life as the doctrine."³ Still he sees in these men his fellow-combatants of an earlier time, and men of kindred spirit and principles to his own. When Luther, in 1522, wrote an Anthology from John Wessel, and in 1523 prefixed an appreciative preface to Savonarola's commentaries on the 31st and 37th Psalms; and when again, in 1525, the *Trialogus* of Wiclit was published in Basel, the meaning of all these incidents was to justify the Reformers of the sixteenth century by the testimony of men of earlier ages who had fought the same battle.

The case is altered, of course, when writers opposed to the Reformation direct their inquiries to the same class of facts, the results at which they arrive being always unfavourable to the Reformers. In comparing the latter with their precursors of earlier times, their uniform aim is to throw them and their doctrines into shadow, either by identifying Luther's principles with those of earlier heretics, so as to place them under a like condemnation, or by attempting to prove that Luther was even worse than his precursors of like spirit. The former was what was aimed at, when the Theological Faculty of Paris, in 1523, decided that the great work against Wiclit, of the English Carmelite, Thomas of Walden († 1431), *The Antiquities of the Catholic Faith*, was

worthy to be printed and published, “because the same is of great use for the refutation of the destructive Lutheran errors;” for herein the Parisian doctors declared the doctrines of the Reformers to be essentially the same as those of Wiclif and the Lollards. John Faber, on the other hand, the South German polemic, who died Bishop of Vienna in 1541, drew a comparison in a controversial work of 1528, between Luther on the one hand, and John Huss and the Bohemian Brethren and John Wessel on the other, in which he reached the conclusion that the latter are all more Christian and less offensive than Luther. He even goes so far at the close of his treatise as to say that if it were possible for all the heretics who lived in the Apostles’ days and afterwards, to rise from the dead and to come together face to face with Luther in a general council or otherwise, they would no doubt damn him as a godless arch-heretic, and refuse to have any fellowship with him; so unheard-of, dreadful, and abominable is the false doctrine which Luther has put forward.⁴

These first attempts to bring into view the historical parallels of earlier times, whether proceeding from the Reformers or their adversaries, were all of a partial and incomplete kind, and possessed no value beyond that of occasional pieces. A more comprehensive treatment of the Reformers before the Reformation, their doctrines and their fortunes—a treatment under which the different individualities were exhibited in the light of their unity of principle and spirit—became possible only after the work of the Reformation had, in some measure at least, been brought to a close, and admitted of being taken into one view as a completed work. And this point was not reached till the middle of the sixteenth century.

From that date important works of such a character began to appear on the evangelical side. On the side of Rome only one work has a claim to be mentioned in this connection, viz., the *Collection of Documents, Controversial Tracts, and the like, relating to Pre-Reformation Persons and Parties*, published by Ortuin Gratius of Cologne in 1535, in prospect of the general council which had then been announced. He was himself one of the Cologne “*Obscuri Viri*,” but was favourable to Church Reform in the Catholic sense; and it was with this view that he selected and published these pieces in the well known “*Fasciculus*.⁵

The corresponding works on the evangelical side divide themselves into two groups, according to the point of view under which they range the particular facts which they embrace. The first group—and this is by far the most numerous—views its subject as a history of persecution, or of evangelical martyrs. The second group handles the personalities whom it introduces as witnesses of the truth, who in earlier times opposed themselves to the Papacy and its “superstition.” The first group may be correctly described as more or less belonging to the sphere of the history of the Church, and the second as belonging to the history of doctrine.

The most important, and indeed almost the only representative of the latter group, is Matthias Flacius of Illyricum, properly called Matthias Vlatzich Frankowitsch. This greatest of the historians belonging to the Lutheran Church of the sixteenth century, the founder of *The Magdeburg Centuries*, published in 1556 his *Catalogue of Witnesses to the Truth who opposed themselves to the Pope before our age*, as a work preliminary to the *Centuries*, which appeared in repeated editions, and continued to receive considerable enrichments even in the seventeenth century.⁶

The lead of the first group is taken by an Englishman, the venerable John Foxe. The experiences of his own life and of the church of his native country were what suggested to him the plan of a church history, arranged under the leading idea of persecution directed against the friends of evangelical truth. During the bloody persecutions which took place under Queen Mary, many faithful men fled to the Continent and found an asylum in the Rhine-lands and Switzerland,—*e.g.*, in Frankfort and Strasburg, in Basel, Zurich, Geneva, and elsewhere. Among others John Foxe repaired to Strasburg, and here appeared in 1554 the first edition of the first book of his *History of the Church and its Chief Persecutions in all Europe from the times of Wiclid down to the Present Age*, a work which he had proceeded with thus far before he left England, and which he dedicated to Duke Christopher of Würtemberg.⁷ He commenced the history with Wiclid, partly, no doubt, from patriotic feeling, but partly also because he regarded the measures adopted against Wiclid as the beginning of the storm of persecution which had continued to rage in England, Bohemia, and Scotland down to his own day. Nor must we omit to mention here that at the end of the sixteenth century and in the first half of the seventeenth, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs* was a favourite family book in many godly English households. Ladies were wont to read it aloud to their children, and to their maidens while at work; and boys as soon as they could read took to the much-loved book.⁸ It helped in no small degree to steel the Protestant character of the English people in the seventeenth century.

Foxe's work gave the key-note, and became a model for many similar works in the German, French, and Bohemian tongues; and in most cases these writings, under the title of

Martyrologies, did not confine themselves, any more than Foxe had done, to the domestic persecutions of the countries of their several authors, but included Germany, France, and England, and went back also to the centuries which preceded the Reformation. When a new edition of Foxe was in preparation in 1632, the Bohemian exiles then living in the Netherlands were requested to draw up an account of the persecutions which had fallen upon their native church, with the view of its being incorporated with the English *Book of Martyrs*. But the new edition was finished at press before the narrative could be got ready, and the Bohemian work remained in manuscript till it appeared in 1648 in Amsterdam or Leyden, under the title, *Historia Persecutionum Ecclesiae Bohemicæ*, which was subsequently translated into German and Bohemian.

During the polemical period which reached from the last quarter of the sixteenth down towards the close of the seventeenth century, all that was done in the field of pre-Reformation history and research was deeply tinged with a controversial character—a remark which applies equally to Germany, France, and England. The first Bodley librarian at Oxford, Thomas James, was an instance in point. This indefatigable scholar, one of the most learned and acute controversialists against Rome, published in 1608 *An Apology for John Wyclif*.⁹ It was written with a polemical view—but at that date it needed a learned and historical interest to be uppermost in the mind even of a polemical writer to induce him to take up the subject of a precursor of the Reformation. Most men were so completely engrossed by the controversies of their own time, that they had neither inclination nor leisure to make excursions into the history of the past.

It was not till the storm-waves of controversial excite-

ment subsided that the early Reformers began to awaken a purer and more unprejudiced historical interest. From that time, about the beginning of the last century, two facts meet the eye of the observer. On the one hand, writers occupied themselves with the lives and labours of single men of pre-Reformation times, and generally in the way of collecting and publishing materials which might serve the purpose of making our knowledge of them more assured and complete; while, on the other hand, other writers put forth reflections upon the different ways and means in and by which the pre-Reformation movement had been carried on as a whole.

The first of these functions was undertaken by men such as the industrious collector, John Lewis, a clergyman of the Church of England, who published in 1720 the earliest regular biography of Wiclid,¹⁰ a work full of material, which he had brought together from public archives and manuscript sources. His subsequent monograph on Bishop Pecock was designed to be a sequel to the biography of Wiclid, and had the same general character.¹¹ Both works leave much to be desired in point of literary execution; but for their wealth of original documents they are still of no little value.

Among German scholars, the man who rendered the most meritorious services in the collection and publication of pre-Reformation documents was Professor Hermann von der Hardt of Helmstädt. His vast and masterly collection of monuments, in illustration of the history of the Council of Constance,¹² had for its chief object to establish by documentary proof the necessity of Reformation which existed at the time of that reforming council.¹³ The excellent example set by Von der Hardt served as a spur to others, and stimulated, in particular, the younger Walch, to publish his

"*Monuments of the Middle Age*," which began to appear in Göttingen in 1757.¹⁴ The work consists entirely of documents relating to church reform, and all belonging to the fifteenth century, being in part speeches which were delivered in the Council of Constance, and partly treatises and tractates of John of Goch, John of Wesel, and others.

On the other hand, we find that since the commencement of the eighteenth century, works began to appear conceived in a purely historical and unprejudiced spirit, containing studies or reflections on the Reformation movements viewed together as a whole; on the various means and ways which were made choice of to promote them; and on the different groups of the Reformers. Walch calls attention in one place to the fact, that there are two classes of witnesses to the truth, those who complained of the vices of the clergy of all degrees, and those who complained of the errors of the teachers. It is well known that the number of writers belonging to the second class is a small one; but all the more highly must the few works be valued in which Roman doctrines were confuted. Among writings of this category Walch rightly reckons John of Goch's tractate on errors in reference to the Evangelical law.¹⁵

This distinction among the Reformers was not new; it rests, at all events, upon the saying of Luther before mentioned, that Wiclif and Huss mainly attacked the life of the Popish Church, while he, on the contrary, attacked chiefly its doctrine. But, though not new, this reflection, taken along with others of a similar kind occurring in other writers of that period, indicates a mode of regarding the subject far removed from the bitterness of polemical feeling, and discovering a certain elevation and freedom of historical view.

In the second and third decades of the present century,

when Protestant writers applied themselves to the production of historical monographs with so much interest, and in such a masterly style both of research and composition, it is at first sight surprising that no one, for a long time, took for a subject of portraiture any of the Reformation figures of the middle age. Chrysostom and Tertullian, Bernard of Clairvaux, and even Gregory VII. and Innocent III., all found at that time enthusiastic biographers; but no one had an eye for Huss, for John of Wesel, and least of all, for Wiclif. This is explained in some measure by the circumstance, that the historical branch of theology had to take a share in the general aim of those years, and was called upon, before every thing else, to contribute to the regeneration of Christian feeling, and the new upbuilding of the kingdom of God, after a long period of negation and deadness. This situation determined the choice which was made of subjects for fresh historical portraiture. Both writers and readers felt an inferior degree of sympathy for men in whom the critical spirit had prevailed, and who had taken up a position of antagonism to the Church-institutions and teaching of their age; and, perhaps, too, both writers and readers were less capable of understanding them.

It was not till the commencement of the second quarter of our century that due attention began again to be directed to "the Reformers before the Reformation;" and as, once before, in the middle age itself, England was the country where the first important precursor of the Reformation arose, so also, in our century, England led the way in recalling the memory of her own great son by the appliances of historical science, and thereby setting an example which other countries followed. Dr. Robert Vaughan published, in 1820, his *Life of Wiclif*, a work founded upon a laborious study of the

manuscript writings of Wiclit, especially of his English sermons and tracts.¹⁶ The way was now opened up, and other explorers soon followed, partly at first under the influence of national and provincial interest; for the first writers, so far as I can find, who followed Vaughan's example, as early as 1829 and 1830, were Netherlanders, who chose for their subject the history of their countrymen, Gerhard Groot and the Brethren of the Common Life.¹⁷

But now German historical research appeared upon the field, and without confining itself to its own nationality, devoted to the precursors of the Reformation a series of investigations which were equally conspicuous for thoroughness and success. First in time, and most distinguished in merit as a labourer in the field was Carl Ullmann, with his monograph on John Wessel, which appeared in 1834, a work which he expanded so much in the second edition by the addition of accounts of John of Goch, John of Wesel, the German Mystics, and the Brethren of the Common Life, that he could give to the whole the title of *Reformers before the Reformation*.¹⁸ The first edition of Ullmann's work was speedily followed by two works on Savonarola, by German scholars, Rudelbach and Meier.¹⁹ And here I may be allowed to add the remark, that in 1860 a third work on Savonarola was published by an Italian, Pasquale Villari, a Roman Catholic, which discovers able research, earnest feeling, and deep veneration for his great and noble countryman. And this instance of an improved manner of treating such subjects, on the side of the Roman Catholic Church, does not stand alone. It is a gratifying fact, which we are here very happy to acknowledge, that much has been done in our own time by writers of that church, to put the Reformation efforts of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in their due light.

As instances, we may mention the work on the *Reforming Councils*, by Herr von Wessenberg,²⁰ and the monograph of Dr. Schwab of Würzburg, on John Gerson, a work of solid merit.²¹ It cannot of course astonish any one that there should be other writers of that church who still handle those men of Reform with undisguised aversion, as has been done, especially in the case of John Huss.²²

Returning to Protestant Church historians, the example of Ullmann has stimulated many to similar researches in the same field. On the subject in particular of the German mystics of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, the labour of investigation during the last thirty years has been so widely extended, that in order not to lose ourselves in a useless enumeration of names and writings, we must content ourselves with mentioning one man instead of many, namely, Charles Schmidt, of Strasburg.²³ Nor would it be just to pass over here in silence the services of Dr. Palačky of Prague, in elucidating the history, not only of Huss, but his precursors and successors. Not only as a historian, but also as a collector and editor of original documents of history, Palačky has undeniable merits.²⁴ His collection of documents for the history of John Huss, in point of completeness, criticism, and orderly arrangement, is a veritable model.²⁵

It is a fact which applies generally to the third quarter of our century, that the labours of research among the original sources of history, have been such as to issue in the discovery and publication of a multitude of hitherto concealed or scarcely accessible original documents, and in the re-issue of several others which were known before, in a more critical and trustworthy form. To these belong, for example, the writings of Eckart, the speculative mystic,

edited by Franz Pfeiffer, the edition of the works of John Staupitz, commenced by Knaake, and the publication of the collected Bohemian sermons and tracts of Huss, by Karl Jaroniér Erben.²⁶

In addition, Constantin Hofler, in Prague, has published a series of *The Historians of the Hussite Movement in Bohemia*.²⁷ Nor has England remained behind. Her most important achievement on this field, and the fruit of the industry and critical labour of many years, is the complete critical edition of the Wycliffite versions of the Bible, edited by the Rev. Josiah Forshall and Sir Frederick Madden.²⁸ Among the numerous chronicles and documents bearing upon the mediæval history of England, which for a series of years back have been published at the cost of the State, some of them never before in print, and others in improved critical editions, there are found many writings in the department of ecclesiastical history, and especially such as have a bearing upon pre-Reformation subjects.

To mention only some of these, the “*Political Poems*,” edited by Thomas Wright, contain a whole series of polemical and satirical poems, which appeared for and against the Wiclit movement in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.²⁹ Further, of important interest for our object, is the correspondence of Grossetête, the celebrated Bishop of Lincoln, edited by the Rev. H. R. Luard, of Cambridge.³⁰ A highly rich and acceptable new source for the history of Wiclit and his followers, has been opened up in the *Fasciculi Zizaniorum Magistri Johannis Wyclif*, collected without doubt by the controversialist, Thomas Netter, of Walden, and published for the first time in 1858, by Professor Walter Waddington Shirley, of Oxford, with an Introduction and Notes full of very valuable matter. At Shirley’s suggestion, recommended

on the strongest grounds, the curators of the Clarendon and University Press resolved to publish a selection of Wiclit's works. Of this collection first appeared the *Trialogus*, with a text critically amended from four Vienna MSS. of the work; and next followed Wiclit's English sermons, and a large number of his short English tracts, edited by the Rev. Thomas Arnold, of Oxford.³²

Thus much has been done since the middle of the present century to elucidate Reformation history, partly by the opening up of new historical sources and the publication of original documents, and partly by the monographic elucidation of single parts of the subject. We venture to come forward as a fellow-labourer in the same field, in undertaking to set forth anew the life and teaching of Wiclit, according to the original sources. John Wiclit appears to us to be the centre of the whole pre-Reformation history. In him meet a multitude of converging lines from the centuries which preceded him; and from him again go forth manifold influences, like wave pulses, which spread themselves widely on every side, and with a force so persistent that we are able to follow the traces of their presence to a later date than the commencement of the German Reformation. Such a man deserves to have a historical portraiture which shall aim to do justice to the greatness of his personality, and to the epochal importance of his work.

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION.

1. Compare letter to Spalatin (Feb. 1520), in Luther's Letters, by De Wette. Berlin, 1826. I., No. 208, 425. Comp. No. 162. Letter to Staupitz, 3 Oct. 1519, p. 341.

2. Luther's Opera. Walch. Ed. XIV., 220 f. In the preface to one of the earliest editions of Wessel's *Farrago Rerum Theologicarum*, Basel, 1522, Melancthon speaks of Wessel in the same way; he mentions him at considerable length in his Postils, in the following terms, among others:—"De plerisque capitibus religionis evangelicæ sensit idem quod a nobis nunc traditur, postquam nostra ætate repurgatio ecclesiae facta est."

3. Luther's Table Talk. Edited by Foerstemann. 1845. II., 441 f.; IV., 391.

4. This rare tract has the title:—"Wie sich Johannis Huss, der Pickarder, und Johannis von Wessalia Leren und Bücher mit Martino Luther vergleichen. Be-schrieben durch Doctor Johann Fabri." Preface dated "Prag in Beham. 1 Sep. 1528." Under the name "Pickhards," the author no doubt refers to the Waldenses; but, in fact, he treats in this part of his tract, without knowing it, of the Bohemian brethren, for he founds his remarks upon the Confession presented by the latter to King Wladislaus.

5. *Fasciculus rerum expetendarum ac fugiendarum*. Colon, 1535, fol. It was not difficult for the English theologian, Edward Brown, to revise, with additions, this collection in the interests of Protestantism. London, 1690, fol. In 2 vols.

6. *Catalogus testium veritatis qui ante nostram aetatem reclamarunt Papae*. Basel, 1556, 8vo. 1562, fol. Geneva, 1608, fol. Frankf., 1666, 4to., with a supplement, printed in Cassel, in 1667.

7. "Commentarii rerum in Ecclesia gestarum, maximarumque per totam Europam persecutionum a Wiclivi temporibus ad hanc usque aetatem descriptio. Liber I. Autore, Joanne Foxo, Anglo. Argentorati. MDLIV." Small 8vo, 221 pp. The second Latin edition, considerably enlarged, appeared at Basel, in folio, in 1559. After his return to England Foxe published his work in English in 1563; and, after his death, in 1587, a second English edition came out in 1610. But the completest edition was that of 1684, in three large folios, with the title, *Acts and Monuments of Martyrs*. Several editions have also appeared in our own time, the best being that edited with copious and valuable notes, by Rev. Josiah Pratt, M.A., and a "Life and Defence of the Martyrologist," by Rev. George Townsend, D.D.

8. *E. g. Nicolaus Ferrar*. *Vide* Mayor's Nicholas Ferrar. Two Lives. Camb. 1858.

9. An Apology for John Wickliffe, showing his conformity with the now Church of England. Collected chiefly out of diverse works of his in written hand, by God's especial providence remaining in the Publike Library at Oxford, of the Honorable Foundation of Sir Thomas Bodley, Knight. Oxford, 1608, 4to.
10. The History of the Life and Sufferings of the Rev. and Learned John Wyclif, D.D. London, 1720. New Ed., Oxford, 1820.
11. The Life of the Learned and Right Rev. Reynold Pecock, faithfully collected from records and MSS. London, 1725 and 1742. New Ed., Oxford, 1820.
12. Rerum Concilii Constantiensis. Tomi I.-VI. Fol. 1696-1700.
13. Monimenta Medii aevi. Vol. I., fasc. 1-4 (1757-1760). Vol. II., fasc. 1-2 (1761-1764).
14. Monimenta Medii aevi. Vol. I., fasc. 4. *Præfatio*, p. xxxiv.
15. Life and Opinions of John de Wycliffe, D.D., illustrated principally from his unpublished Manuscripts. 2 vols. London, 1828. The second improved edition appeared in 1831, and in 1853, Vaughan published a new work in one volume, entitled, "John de Wycliffe: A Monograph." London, 1853. The merits of Vaughan's labours on Wiclif consist of two things—(1.) In the copious information touching Wiclif obtained from manuscript sources. Vaughan was, in particular, the first who communicated a fuller knowledge of Wiclif's English sermons. (2.) In a certain degree of chronological order, which he introduced into the series of Wiclif's writings—a circumstance of much importance, because thereby it became possible to follow, in some degree, the gradual progress of the reformer's opinions, and a comparison of the dates of his numerous writings served to exhibit his character for consistency and firmness in a more honourable light. The chief defects of Vaughan's work were that he manifested less interest in the speculative and strictly theological element of Wiclif's writings than in their practical and religious element, and that he left almost entirely out of consideration his Latin works, being of opinion that they were scholastic treatises of comparatively little worth. But, notwithstanding these defects, Vaughan's work must always take a foremost place as the basis of all accurate knowledge of Wiclif, and it has, in fact, been drawn upon by many later writers—*e. g.*, in England, by Le Bas, in his "Life of Wyclif," 1853; in the Netherlands, by De Ruever-Gronemann, *Diatrībe in Johannis Wickliffe Vitam, Ingenium, Scripta*. Utrecht, 1837; in Germany, by Engelhard, "Wycliffe, als Prediger, Erlangen," 1834; by Neander and Giesler, in their histories of the Church; and, further, in my Essay on Wiclif and the Lollards, *Zeitschrift für Histor-Theologie*, 1853. Boehringer in his "Kirche Christi und ihre Zeugen," II. 4, 1856, has chiefly made use of the latter work of Vaughan—the Monograph.
16. So the two Clarisse—first the son and then the father—in two papers in the "Archives of Church History," edited by Kist and Royaards, *Over den Geest en de Denkwyse Van Geert Groot*, 1829. Also, Delprat *Verhandeling over de Broederschap van G. Groot*. Utrecht. 1830.
17. Johann Wessel, ein Vorgänger Lutheri. Gotha. 1834. The second edition, in two volumes, appeared in 1841, under the title, "Reformatoren vor der Reformation, vornähmlich in Deutschland und den Niederlanden." English translation by Rev. Robert Menzies. Clark, Edinburgh, 1855.

18. Rudelbach Hieronymus Savonarola und Seine Zeit, 1835. Fredr. Karl Meier Girolamo Savonarola aus zum grossen Theile Handschriftlichen Quellen dargestellt. 1836.
19. Pasquali Villari. Geschichte Girolamo Savonarola's und seiner Zeit. Nach neuen Quellen dargestellt. In two volumes. The original appeared in 1860 and 1861. We use the translation of Berduscheck. Leipzig, 1868.
20. "Die grossen Kirchenversammlungen der fünfzehnten und sechzehnten Jahrhunderts, in Beziehung auf Kirchenbesserung geschichtlich und kritisch dargestellt. 4 Bände, Constanza. 1840.
21. Johannes Gerson. Eine Monographie. Würzburg, 1858.
22. Von Helfert, Hus und Hieronymus, 1853. Hoefler, Magister Johannes Hus. Prag., 1864.
23. Johann Tauler von Strassburg. Hamburg, 1841. Nicolaus von Basel. Wien, 1866.
24. Geschichte von Böhmen. 5 Theile. Prag., 1836–1867.
25. Documenta Joannis Hus vitam doctrinam—illustrantia. Prag., 1860.
26. Published in Prague in three volumes, 1865–8.
27. Published in Vienna, 1856, in three volumes, as parts of the "Fontes rerum Austriacarum. I. Division." Vol. 2.
28. The Wycliffite versions of the Holy Bible. 4 vols. 4to. Oxford, 1850.
27. Political Poems and Songs relating to English History. Composed during the period from the accession of Edward III. to that of Richard III. Edited by Thomas Wright. London, 1859. 2 vols.
30. Roberti Grossstepe Episcopi quondam Lincolniensis Epistolæ. Edited by Henry Richard Luard. London, 1861.
31. Fasciculi Zizaniorum Magistri Johannis Wyclif cum tritico. Ascribed to Thomas Netter of Walden. Edited by the Rev. Walter Waddington Shirley, M.A. London, 1858.
32. Joannis Wicliif Trialogus cum Supplemento Trialogi. Edidit Gotthardus Lechler. Oxonii, 1869. Select English Works of John Wicliif. Edited by Thomas Arnold, M.A., Oxford. Vol. I. 1869. Sermons on the Gospels for Sundays and Festivals. Vol. II. 1871. Sermons on the Ferial Gospels and Sunday Epistles. Treatises. Vol. III. 1871. Miscellaneous works.

Good morning little school girl

CHAPTER X.

Can I come home with you?

ENGLISH PRECURSORS OF WICLIF.

SECTION I.—*Mixture and Consolidation of Races in the English People.*

IT is impossible to take a rapid survey of the course of English history during the middle ages, without being struck with the observation how many foreign elements mingled with it in ever varying succession, and how violent were the collisions and deep-reaching the contests which sprang from this cause.

We leave out of view, of course, the Romans who had quitted the soil of Britain before the close of ancient history, and had left the country to itself. In the middle of the fifth century, the Angles, Jutes, and Saxons, all sea-going tribes of lower Germany, effected a conquest of the land, and drove back the Celtic inhabitants to its western borders. That was an immigration of pure German races. Five centuries later the predatory and devastating expeditions of the Danes broke over the country. That was the Scandinavian invasion, which took the form in the end of a personal union between England and Denmark. But when, after two more centuries, the long-settled Saxon population stirred itself again and bestowed the crown upon one of its own race, Duke William of Normandy intervened with a strong hand; and with "The Conquest" the Franco-Norman nationality gained the ascen-

dancy in England; and it was not till two more centuries had passed away that the Saxon element worked itself up again into prominence and power.

What a piebald mixture of peoples! What changes of fortune among the different nationalities! And yet the result of all was not a mere medley of peoples, without colour and character, but on the contrary, a nation and a national character of remarkable vigour, and extremely well defined. For the numerous collisions and hard conflicts which occurred among the different races served only to strengthen and steel the kernel of the Saxon element of the population. This effect can be clearly seen and measured in the language and literature of the country, which are the first things upon which every people stamps its own impress.

It is a fact that after the first and earliest efflorescence of the Anglo-Saxon language, in the age immediately succeeding the conversion of the people to Christianity, a second took place in the days of Alfred the Great¹—not without a deep connection with the elastic reaction of the Saxon nationality against Danish despotism. And it is a circumstance of the same kind that the new Anglo-Saxon dialect developed itself from about the year 1100,—a fact which was unquestionably owing to the Conquest which had taken place not long before, and an indication that the old Saxon stock was once more gathering up its strength in reaction against the new Norman-French element. On the other hand, the first development of the language which is called “English,” in distinction from Anglo-Saxon—old English, we mean²—belongs to the period in which a fusion began to take place between the Norman families and the Saxon stock, and that in the direction of an approximation of the Norman nobility to the Saxons—not the converse.

The former ceased to feel as Frenchmen, and learned to think and speak as Englishmen.

We shall soon have an opportunity of convincing ourselves what an important share the religious interest had in producing this change. Meanwhile so much as this is clear, that the introduction of the Norman-French element, like the Danish invasion of an earlier time, did not in the least hinder, but on the contrary gave a stimulus to, the development of a compact and independent Saxon nationality. It was in conflict with foreign elements and their usurped power that the Saxon nation first of all maintained its own individuality, and next developed itself into the English people.

When we turn our attention to the faith of the nation and the religious side of their life, the antagonisms and the successive changes which they present to view are scarcely less abrupt. The British inhabitants of the country had received the Gospel during the Roman occupation, but apparently not from Rome, but rather, in the first instance, from the shores of the Levant. When the Roman domination of the island came to an end, the Britons had already for the most part been converted to Christianity. On the other hand, the Saxons and Angles, the Frisians and Jutes, when they established themselves in the country, were entirely ignorant of the Gospel. They brought with them the old German Paganism, they drove back the British population and Christianity along with it, and they stamped again upon the land, as far as they might, a heathen impress.

Then arrived, at the end of the sixth century, at the instance of Gregory the Great, a completely organised Christian mission; and within the comparatively brief period of less than a hundred years this mission accom-

plished the result of carrying over to Christianity the whole of the related kingdoms of the Saxon heptarchy. And now the old inhabitants of Celto-British descent and the Saxons (as the Britons called the others) might have joined hands as Christians, had it not been for an obstacle which could not be taken out of the way.

The social and liturgical form in which Christianity was planted among the Saxons in England was essentially different from the ecclesiastical order and usage of the old British Christians. Among the latter, to say nothing of smaller liturgical differences, the ecclesiastical centre of gravity was in the monasteries, not in the episcopate, in addition to which they were under no subjection to the Bishops of Rome—their church life was entirely autonomous and national. The missionaries to the Saxons had been sent forth from Rome, and the Anglo-Saxon Church was, so to speak, a Roman colony; its whole church order received, as was to be expected, the impress of the Church of the West, and in particular the government of the church was placed in the hands of the Bishops, who in their turn were dependent upon the See of Rome. The difference, or rather the opposition, was felt on both sides vividly enough, and led to severe collisions—to a struggle for victory, the prize of which on the one side was the exclusive domination of the Roman Church, on the other, if not the dominancy, at least the continued existence of the old British ecclesiastical constitution. On which side lay the better hope of victory it is not difficult to estimate. A like contest repeated itself somewhat later upon the German soil, where a missionary who went forth from the young Anglo-Saxon Church opened fight against the church which had been planted among the Germans in part by old British missionaries, and at last

bound the German Church so closely and tightly to Rome, that it too was converted by Boniface very much into a Roman colony.

It would be an error, nevertheless, to believe that Rome obtained in England an absolute victory, or that the old British Church, with its peculiar independent character, disappeared without a trace in the Romish Anglo-Saxon Church.³ It is nearer the truth to say, that the British Church made its influence felt in the Anglo-Saxon, at least in single provinces, especially in the north of England; and perhaps it was not without the operation of this influence that a certain spirit of church autonomy developed itself at an early period among the Anglo-Saxon people. It was not long after this development began to manifest itself, when the Danes invaded the country. They transplanted into England the heathenism of Scandinavia. The threatening danger woke up the Saxon elasticity to a vigorous resistance. The wars of freedom under King Alfred were animated by a Christian inspiration, and by the feeling that not only the existence of the nation, but also of the Church of Christ in the land was at stake.

But what a new spirit prevailed in church affairs after the Norman Conquest! It was a genuine adventure of the Norman type—an enterprise of bold, romantic daring, when Duke William, with a show of right, and availing himself of favouring circumstances, seized upon the English crown. But he took the step not without the previous knowledge and approval of the Pope. Alexander II. sent him, for use in the enterprise, a consecrated banner of St. Peter. The Duke was to carry it on board his own ship. With the conquest of England by the Normans, Rome hoped to make a conquest for herself, and not without reason. In the noble

families of Normandy, the knightly lust of battle and conquest was most intimately blended with knightly devotion to the Church and the Pope. In point of fact, from the moment of the conquest, the bond between Rome and the English Church was drawn incomparably closer than it had ever been under the Saxon dynasty.

The clergy, partly of Norman-French, partly of pure Roman descent, to whom the English sees were now transferred, could have no national sympathies with Anglo-Saxon Christianity. Strangers, they passed into the midst of a strange church. It was natural that they should take up the position of abstract ecclesiastical right. Recall the instance of Lanfranc, a born Italian, who, in 1070, four years after the battle of Hastings, from being Prior of Bec, was promoted to be Archbishop of Canterbury. At the same date a Norman became Archbishop of York. As a general rule, the highest dignities of the English Church fell to Normans, and these priests of the Continent were all supporters of the new hierarchical movement, which began in the middle of the same century—of those ideas touching the supremacy of the Pope above the Church, and of the Church above the State, of which Hildebrand himself had been the deliberate and most emphatic champion. William the Conqueror, indeed, was not the man to suffer in silence any encroachments of the Pope upon the rights of his crown, to say nothing of the pretensions of any ecclesiastical dignitary in his own kingdom. A serious discord, which took place between the crown and the Primate, now Anselm of Canterbury, arising out of the investiture controversy, was only composed by the prudent concessions of Paschal II. to Henry I. in 1106.

All the more formidable was the conflict between the

royal and ecclesiastical powers under Henry II., exactly a hundred years after the conquest. The quarrel in the main concerned the limits of the civil and ecclesiastical jurisdictions—the right of exemption, *e.g.*, from the jurisdiction of the municipal courts, which was claimed for the clergy by the Archbishop Thomas à Becket; and it may suffice to remind the reader in passing how in the end the Archbishop was assassinated (1170) by several knights, not without the indirect complicity of the king, and how, in consequence of that evil deed, Henry had to bow himself down in most humiliating penance (12th July 1174) at the grave of the now canonised champion of the Church's rights and liberties—a penance far more ignominious even than that of Canossa.⁴ The hierarchy obtained a great victory, as indeed had been in prospect for it ever since the Norman Conquest.

And yet this was not the culminating point to which the power of the Church attained in England. It did not reach that till forty years later. Innocent III. accomplished what Gregory VII. had striven for in the Conqueror's day in vain. King John, son of Henry II., finding himself in the greatest dangers, both from without and within the realm, had had recourse to a desperate step. On the 15th of May 1213, he had surrendered his kingdom, in favour of the apostles Peter and Paul and the Church of Rome, into the hands of Innocent III. and his successors. He received it, indeed, immediately back again from the Pope in fief, but not before taking for himself and his successors in all due form, the oath of fealty to the Pope as his liege lord, and binding himself to pay an annual tribute of 1000 marks sterling, in addition to the usual Peter's pence. Thereby England became literally a portion

of the Church-State, the king a vassal of the Pope, and the Pope liege lord and sovereign of England. England entered into and became a member of the Papal state system, which already included Portugal, Arragon, the kingdom of Sicily Hungary, Bulgaria, and other States—a relation to the Papacy which was turned to practical account to the utmost of the Church's power, by the levying of imposts from the kingdom, as well as by the accumulation of English church offices and dignities in the hands of Italians.

But from the moment when King John made over to the Papal See a feudal supremacy in England, the moral influence of the Papacy in the country began to stoop towards its overthrow. The English nobility were the first to feel the humiliation most deeply, and complained indignantly to the king that he had brought what he had found a free kingdom into bondage.⁶ Within two years the condition of things for a considerable time was such that the revolted barons held the chief power of the State in their hands. And then it was that *Magna Charta*, the fundamental charter of the nation's liberties, was negotiated between John and his subjects (15th June 1215). In this document, the importance of which was even then universally felt, not a word was said of the liege-lordship of the Pope, although only two years had passed since this relation had been entered into, and no doubt this omission was intentional on the part of the barons.

Still the whole movement which had been called forth in ever-growing force against the despotic rule of the distrusted Prince, was also aimed, in the second instance, against Rome. The King himself, in a letter to Innocent III. (13th September 1215), assures him that the earls and barons of the kingdom publicly alleged as the chief cause

of their revolt, his own act of submission to the Pope ;⁷ and the Pope, on his side, considered the insurrection as directed in part against himself. An important reaction in the spirit of the Anglican Church, and in its attitude towards the Roman See, could not fail to be produced by the fact, that in that celebrated state-treaty there was a guarantee given for all the liberties and rights of the national church, as well as for all those of all other classes and corporations in the kingdom.⁸ While in the first instance, the great nobles and hierarchy, the lower nobility and the municipalities, all learned to feel their oneness as a nation, and to be sensible of their interests in common, there was no less a development in the ecclesiastical body of a national spirit. The spirit of insular independence began to make itself felt also in the religious sphere.

It had a powerful influence in the same religious direction, that from the beginning of the 13th century the Saxon element of the nation was again steadily coming to the front, and pressing the Norman element more and more into the background. Already, in 1204, Normandy had fallen to the crown of France. This loss had naturally the effect of first diminishing the immigration from Normandy, and then, in time, of stopping it altogether. On the other hand, the families which had previously immigrated—to say nothing of the decimation which they had suffered in consequence of the political movements under King John and his successor, Henry III.—had in process of time drawn closer in many ways to the Saxon population. The arbitrary oppression which the nobles suffered at the hand of the kings brought up the memory of the earlier rights and privileges of the nobility under the Saxon kings. The barons began to claim the like for themselves, and appealed to them in support of

their claim in their struggle with King John. The nobles no longer felt themselves to be Normans, but Englishmen ; and all the more so, the more clearly men became conscious how much in questions of freedom and popular right was owing to the support of the lower nobility, and even to the municipalities, especially to the citizens of London.

This consolidation of the nation, in which the Saxon population constituted the kernel, could not remain without influence upon the self-consciousness and the hereditary independent genius of the Anglican Church. A symptom of this appeared in the secret combination of noblemen and priests, which, in 1231, addressed threatening letters to the capitular bodies and the abbeys, demanding of them to refuse payment to the agents of Rome of all imposts in money and kind. Not only so ; but things, in fact, went so far that a Romish cleric, who was in possession of an English prelacy, was captured by the conspirators and not set at liberty again till five weeks after the loss of all his goods, while in country districts the full corn lofts of Roman parish priests were plundered and emptied.⁹ In 1240 the cardinal legate Otho himself was menaced most seriously by an insurrection of students in Oxford. Such tumultuous proceedings were of course not suffered by the government. But neither were there wanting lawful measures directed against the Roman usurpations. The nobles, in a letter to Gregory IX., put in a protest in support of their violated rights of church patronage ; and even bishops and prelates submitted complaints, sometimes to the papal legates, and sometimes to the Pope himself.

SECTION II.—*Robert Grossetête, Bishop of Lincoln.*

Tell your mother and father

Of this state of feeling the most important and venerable representative was indisputably the learned and courageous Bishop of Lincoln, Robert Grossetête—a man who was held in exceptionally high admiration by his contemporaries, to whom England in the following centuries also deferred as a high authority, and who was ever regarded by Wiclit in particular (who refers to him on innumerable occasions) with the highest respect. To such a man it is due that we should here present at least in outline a sketch of his character and career.¹⁰

Robert Grossetête (in Latin *Capito*, in English *Greathead*) was one of those rare men who so harmoniously combine mastery in science with mastery in practical life, that they may be termed princes in the domain of mind. As to science, he united in himself the whole knowledge of his age to such an extent that a man so eminent in genius as Roger Bacon, his junior contemporary and grateful friend, said of him that “The Bishop of Lincoln was the only man living who was in possession of all the sciences.”¹¹ But, however comprehensive and independent his knowledge was, it would be a great error to think of him as a man who was more than everything else a man of learning. On the contrary, with all his scientific greatness, Grossetête was still predominantly a man of action—a man full of character in the highest sense, a churchman such as few have ever equalled; and, from the day of his elevation to the episcopate, every inch a bishop. too.

But when I ask myself what was the moving-spring, the innermost kernel of his aims and actions, I am able to name

nothing but his godly solicitude and care for souls. When he carries on for years a law-suit with his chapter for the right of episcopal visitation; when he contends for "the freedom of the church," apparently in a hierarchical spirit; when he repels with decision the encroachments of the Pope and his legates; when he brings sharp discipline to bear upon careless and worldly monks and priests, and labours to put a stop to the desecration of charities and churchyards; when he forms and draws out the young Orders of the Franciscans and Dominicans,—in all this he has nothing else in view but the good of souls. That is his last and highest aim, in the pursuit of which the consciousness of his heavy responsibility attends him at every step, while a sincere fear of God imparts such strength to his mind as to give him victory over all the fear of man.

How did Grossetête become the man he was? Let us glance at the course of his outer and inner life. There are at least some original materials from which we can attempt to obtain an answer to this inquiry.¹²

It is an accepted date that Grossetête was born in 1175, or one or two years earlier. For it is certain that at his death, in 1253, he was a man of great age; and when the learned Giraldus Cambrensis recommended him to the Bishop of Hereford, William de Vere, which took place at latest in 1199 (for in this year the bishop just named died), he gave him the title of *Magister*, so that he was already a Master of Arts, and must have been a young man of from twenty to twenty-five years; and this takes us back for his birth to nearly the same date as before. He was a native of Stradbrook, in the county of Suffolk, and according to some chronicles, of humble extraction. The chronicle of Lanercost has a notice, which is credible enough in itself, and signifi-

cant of his character,¹³ that on one occasion Grossetête replied to an earl, who had expressed some astonishment at his noble bearing and manners, that it was true he was sprung of parents in humble station, but from his earliest years he had made a study of the characters of the best men in the Bible, and that he had formed himself upon their model.

Of his student and travelling years we know little. Only so much is certain that he studied in Oxford. It is less clearly established, but not in itself improbable, that he completed his studies in Paris. Later, as already stated, he was introduced by Giraldus to the Bishop of Hereford as a young man who would be of service to him, not only in his manifold public employment and judicial decisions, but also in the care of his health. In addition to theology, therefore, Grossetête must have prosecuted successfully the study of medicine and canon law. But Bishop de Vere died in 1199, and Grossetête betook himself again to Oxford, where he remained for the next thirty-five years, in the course of which he became Doctor of Theology and *Rector scholarum*. Several of his writings, including his Commentaries on Aristotle and Boethius, besides several theological works, no doubt had their origin in lectures which he delivered in the University. Several church preferments were also conferred upon him, such as a stall in the Cathedral of Lincoln, the Archdeaconry of Leicester, etc. Oxford appears to have continued to be his principal residence down to the year 1235, when he was chosen by the Chapter of Lincoln to be their bishop.

Some years before this he seems to have experienced something of the nature of a religious awakening. In the end of October 1231 or 1232 he had a dangerous illness. On his sick-bed and during his recovery his heart appears to

have been deeply moved. He took counsel with his conscience, particularly on the question whether it was right before God for him to hold several livings at the same time.¹⁴ It was, without doubt, at this time that, by the medium of a pious man whose name has not come down to us, he submitted to the Pope the question whether he could, with a good conscience, retain the parochial charge which he held, along with his sinecure prebends. The answer which was orally communicated to him was thoroughly Roman,—by no means could he retain such a plurality *without a dispensation*. But this was a mode of arrangement which his awakened conscience forbade him to make use of, and without more ado he resigned the whole of the benefices which he possessed, with the sole exception of his stall at Lincoln. We learn this from a letter of the year 1232 to his sister Inetta—a nun.¹⁵ The sister by no means approved of her brother's self-denying step. She feared that by his act of renunciation of income he had reduced himself to penury. But his only feeling was one of relief from a burden on his conscience, and he endeavours to remove her anxiety on that score, and to reconcile her to the resolution to which he had already given effect. The conscientiousness and the concern for his own soul, of which we have here a glimpse, awakened in Grossetête an earnest concern for the cure of souls at large, of which from that time forward he gave ever stronger proofs.

After the death of the Bishop of Lincoln, Hugh of Wells, with whom he was on terms of personal friendship, Grossetête, in the spring of 1235, was advanced to the bishoprick. As Chancellor of the University of Oxford, as Archdeacon of Leicester, and in other positions, he had already been successful in carrying out many measures of a practical

kind; and now he was advanced to a post in which his action as an ecclesiastical ruler shone out conspicuously far and wide.

This was in part owing to the importance of this particular see. The diocese of Lincoln was then, and for some centuries afterwards, by far the largest and most populous in the whole of England. More than once in his letters Grossetête refers to its immense extent and numerous inhabitants.¹⁶ It included at that day eight archdeaconries, of which only two may here be mentioned, Oxford and Leicester, the former, because the University was subject to the Bishop of Lincoln as its ordinary, and the latter, because to the archdeaconry, a century later, Wiclf, as parish priest of Lutterworth, belonged. The Cathedral,¹⁷ built at the commencement of the Norman period, stands, with the older portion of the city, upon a height, while the newer portion of the city descends the hill to the plain watered by the river Witham. None of the English cathedrals has so splendid a site as that of Lincoln; with its three towers it is seen at a distance of fifty miles to the north and thirty to the south, and is considered one of the most beautiful cathedrals in the kingdom.

As soon as he was installed, Grossetête grasped the helm with a firm hand, and took immediate steps for the removal of abuses which had found their way into the diocese. His first act was to address a circular letter to all his archdeacons, in which he instructed them to admonish the parishes of various evil customs which were on the increase, by which Sundays, festivals, or holy names were desecrated. This missive goes right into matters of practical life, and is inspired by a high moral earnestness, by a conscientious solicitude for the good of souls, and by a burning zeal for

the House of God.¹⁸ Nor was it only in writing or by intermediaries, but also directly and personally, that the new bishop intervened. In the very first year after his admission to office he commenced a personal visitation of the monasteries of the diocese, which resulted in not fewer than seven abbots and three priors being immediately deprived. *I am the back-door man*

Nor was it Grossetête's intention only to interfere in cases at a distance, and to shut his eyes to disorders which lay nearer home. He took steps to visit and reform the chapter of his own cathedral. But now his troubles began. The chapter, consisting of not fewer than twenty-one canons, took a protest against his proceedings, alleging that the bishop was allowing himself in unexampled encroachments of authority, and was touching their immemorial rights. The chapter had an autonomy of its own, and was subject only to its own dean; only if the dean neglected his duty, or himself appealed to the bishop, had the latter a right to say a single word.¹⁹ In 1239 the matter grew to a quarrel between bishop and chapter. The dispute became known all over the kingdom, and could not be healed either by the Archbishop of Canterbury or by Otho, the Pope's legate. Bishop Robert made a journey in November 1244 to Lyons, where Innocent IV. was then residing. A commissioner of the chapter was already there before him. The Pope's decision on the main point—the right of visitation—was soon obtained, and was entirely in favour of the bishop, and, this gained, Grossetête lost no time in making use of his right now finally set at rest, although he had still to encounter difficulties in carrying it into effect.

Along with this business he carried forward with zeal his visitation of parishes and cloisters. As the effect of this,

several unworthy parish priests were removed, and many priors who had been guilty of acts of violence resigned their offices. Other bishops also were stimulated to do the like by the persistency and emphasis with which Grossetête prosecuted this visitorial work. It even appears as though the estimation and influence of the vigorous bishop rose higher and higher in proportion to the amount of conflict which it cost him to carry through his plans for the well-being of the church. In fact, his episcopal career was an almost unbroken succession of collisions and conflicts. Long before the affair with his own chapter had been brought to a settlement, he became involved in differences with powerful spiritual corporations—with the Abbot of Westminster, and with the convent of Christ Church in Canterbury. Nay, the heroic opposition to wrong which he was compelled from time to time to undertake, rose higher still. In repeated instances, sometimes single-handed, sometimes along with other bishops, he stood forward in resistance to King Henry III. himself; and what for a man in his position, and in view of the spirit of his age, will be seen to amount to a vast deal more—he remained true to his own convictions of duty and to his own resolves, even against the Pope himself, and that Pope a man like Innocent IV. But of this more in the sequel.

In view of this multitude of spiritual conflicts we can easily understand that his opponents accused him of a want of heart and a love of strife. Even at this distance of time, after the lapse of six centuries, upon a superficial consideration of a life so full of contention, one might easily receive the impression that this energetic man was all too fond of strife, if not even a hierarch of haughty and imperious temper. But on a closer inspection the case stands quite otherwise.

A careful examination of his correspondence has forced upon me the conviction that in entering into these numerous contentions Grossetête was influenced, not by a violent temperament, but by the dictates of conscience. On one occasion he writes as follows to the Abbot of Leicester:—" You accuse us of iron-heartedness and want of pity. Alas! would that we had an iron heart, steeled against the flatteries of tempters, a strong heart, proof against the terrors of the wicked, a sharp heart, cutting off sins and hewing in pieces the bad when they oppose themselves."²⁰

From this single utterance we may perceive that what he did could not have been the outflow of mere natural temperament, but must have been the result of principle and conviction. It was in this sense he replied to the dean and chapter of Sarum, who admonished him to live in peace with his own chapter. That peace, he said, was what he aimed at beyond everything else, but the true peace, not the false; for the latter is only a perversion of the true God-appointed order.²¹ But that he was not led by a determination to have everything his own way is plain, from the circumstance that what he laid the whole stress upon in his conflicts was not to have success in them, but to preserve in all of them a good conscience. While he was still Archdeacon of Leicester he had a difference with the Benedictine Convent of Reading—but he was prepared to submit himself unreservedly to the decision of an umpire whom both parties might be able to agree upon.²² And on a later occasion when he had expressed himself at full length against an appointment which Cardinal Otho had desired for a favourite of his, he contented himself with having thus referred the matter to the Cardinal's own conscience, and left it, in quiet, to his own decision.²³ It is his abiding sense of responsibility, and

his fear of “Him who is able to destroy body and soul in hell,” which moves him in all cases when he is compelled to place himself in opposition to personages of high influence and place.

But does not, at least, the suspicion of hierarchical pride still remain attached to him? The answer to this is, that however little Grossetête was inclined at any time to abate aught of his episcopal right, whether in dealing with his subordinates or his superiors, with the great men of the realm, or with the supreme Head of the Church himself, in every case the episcopal dignity and power was looked upon by him not as an end but a means. The last end to him was the good of souls. To that end, and to that alone, behoved to be subservient both priesthood and patrondom, bishopdom and popedom, the Church’s liberties and the Church’s wealth, each in its own measure and after its own manner. When in his official journeys he gathered around him the parochial clergy of a rural deanery, and preached before them, he had in his thoughts the whole of the congregations of these parish priests, and used to say that “it was his duty to preach the Word of God to all the souls in his diocese; but it was impossible for him to do so personally, considering the multitude of parish churches and the immense population of the diocese; and he could think of no other way of helping himself than to preach God’s Word to the priests and vicars and curates of each deanery, assembled around him in the course of his visitations, in order to do through them, at least to some extent, what he found himself entirely unable to do for the people in person.”²⁴

It is surprising, indeed, to hear a man of such sentiments as these laying down, at an earlier period of his life, to an officer of State, the principle that civil legislation behoves to

conform itself to the laws of the Church, because temporal princes receive from the Church all the power and dignity which they possess; that both swords, material and spiritual, belong to St. Peter, with only this difference, that the princes of the Church handle only the spiritual sword, while they wield the material sword through the hands of temporal princes, who, however, are bound to draw it and sheathe it under their direction.²⁵ That is quite the language of an Innocent III.

It looks as if Grossetête, in his later life, must have passed over to the other camp. But that is not the true state of the case.²⁶ Even in his earlier life it was not the deepest meaning of his thoughts to surrender up all unconditionally to St. Peter's successor, or to claim plenary powers for the episcopate for its own sake. It is true that he puts the law of the Church on a footing of full equality with the commandments of God. It is true also, that he puts the State decidedly under the Church, and denies its autonomy. But he sees these things through the spectacles of his own century, and is unable to set himself loose from its ideas. Still, neither the episcopate nor the papacy exists in his view for itself; both exist for the glory of God and for the good of God's kingdom. The whole conduct and action of the man, not only in later but also in earlier life, justifies us in so interpreting his innermost thoughts. We can see from the rejoinder which he made to the statesman's reply, which would appear to have been couched in a tone of cutting irony, that our bishop had had no intention in his first letter, to mount upon the high horse of hierarchical pride.²⁷

If we look for the innermost kernel of all the thought and effort of this man who had an incredible amount of

business to get through, we can find it in nothing else than in his earnest solicitude for souls. To this end he laboured with special zeal for the moral and religious elevation of the pastoral office. A doctor of theology, William of Cerdà, when he had himself been appointed to a pastoral charge, found much more pleasure in carrying on his lectures in the University of Paris than in taking personal charge of his parishioners in England. But Grossetête reminds him with equal tenderness and warmth that he should choose rather to be himself a pastor, and to feed the sheep of Christ in his own parish, than to read lectures to other pastors from the chair.²⁸ We see here how high a place he assigned to the pastoral office, and that though he stood at the top of the science of his time, he did not look upon science as the highest thing, but upon life, and especially the devoted cure of souls. What else but the reform of the pastoral office was the drift of all the visitation work which Grossetête undertook and carried through with such peculiar zeal? And the sermons which he was accustomed to preach in his visitation tours—at ordinations and consecrations of churches before the assembled pastors of one or other of his seventy-two rural deaneries, were nothing else but appeals of the chief pastor of the flock to the under shepherds, designed to quicken their consciences and to press the duties of their office close upon their hearts. Some of these addresses which have come down to us, form in fact a pastoral theology *in nuce*.²⁹ When, in the course of his visitations, he made use of his disciplinary powers to depose unworthy priests upon the spot, and when he used his patronage to fill vacant benefices with active, well-educated men, accustomed to preach, he did his utmost to raise the character of the pastorate. Add to this the watchful eye which he kept

upon the appointments made to parishes in his diocese by private patrons and corporations, and even by the crown and the papal court. In how many instances did he put off the canonical admission of a presentee! and what a multitude of unpleasant conflicts were brought upon him by his conscientious vigilance in this respect! A considerable portion of his correspondence is taken up exclusively with this subject.

Grossetête had scarcely taken possession of his see when an officer of State, William of Raleyer (Raleigh), presented to a parish a youth called William of Grana. The bishop refused to confirm the appointment, partly on account of his being under age, and partly on account of his inadequate attainments; and the refusal was highly resented by the patron. We have still the letter in which the bishop stated his reasons for the act, and he does so in a way which fills us with high appreciation of his conscientiousness and piety.³⁰ And there were numerous other instances of a similar kind, in which he withheld his consent to appointments on account either of deficient age or inadequate scholarship, or both together; or on the ground of conduct and deportment wholly unbecoming the priestly office.

With no less vigilance did this faithful and watchful chief pastor take heed to the manner in which parish priests after their appointment fulfilled the duties of their office. As may be easily conceived, he looked with no friendly eye upon the accumulation of livings in the same hands—a practice in which personal revenue was the only thing considered, and the interests of parishioners were treated as quite a secondary affair. More than once he opposed himself to this *pluralitas beneficiorum*.³¹

At the time of his awakening, about 1232, he had been

strict with himself in this respect, and now he was also strict with others. In repeated instances he insisted that every one who was intrusted with the care of souls should be resident in his parish. One of these was the case of a Magister Richard of Cornwall, to whom he had given a living on the recommendation of the Cardinal Egidius, and who had manifested a preference for Rome as a residence, to the neglect of his cure. The bishop sent to him, through the Cardinal, a very peremptory injunction to reside in his parish, begging him sarcastically not to refuse "to let himself down from the height of Rome to the level of England, in order to feed the sheep, as the Son of God had descended from the throne of His majesty to the ignominy of the Cross in order to redeem them."³²

Another matter which from time to time gave the bishop much trouble, had a like bearing upon the elevation of the spiritual offices of the church, viz., the resistance which he opposed to the appointment of abbots and clerics to judicial functions, and his efforts to bring back all offices ordained for the good of souls to their purely ecclesiastical and religious destination and use. In the year 1236 the King appointed the Benedictine Abbot of Ramsey to be a Judge in Council, an appointment which gave great distress to the conscientious chief pastor. That an abbot should undertake such a function appeared to him to be irreconcileable with the vows of his order, and with the clerical office in general; and this all the more that a judge might easily find himself in the position of having to pronounce sentences of death. He therefore addressed himself to the Archbishop of Canterbury to request him to use his influence with the King to obtain, if possible, a recall of the appointment. The Archbishop was of opinion that the question

of principle involved in the case ought to be referred for decision to the next general council. But for the bishop it became more and more urgently a question of conscience, whether it was not sin in a monk to undertake the office of judge.

It seemed to him clear that the question could only be answered in the affirmative. But, if so, then it was also certain that the bishop, who allowed this to be done, was likewise in sin. In a second letter, therefore, he begs and conjures the Archbishop to give a plain and clear answer to the question—whether, yea or nay, it is sin in a monk or cleric to accept a judge's commission, and whether, yea or nay, it is sin in a bishop to allow this to be done.³³ What the issue of the matter was cannot be learnt from the correspondence, and is of less interest to us than the fact that Grossetête laboured in this direction as well as in others for the restoration of good order in all the spiritual offices of the church.

But that both church and church-office did not appear to him to be their own end and object, that in his eyes the cure and the salvation of souls held a higher place than the pastoral office taken by itself, is manifest beyond all doubt, from the circumstance that Grossetête brought forward the new Mendicant orders to the work of preaching and cure of souls. Already, in his earlier days while he still worked in Oxford, he had entered into close relations with the Franciscans, and had done his best to bring them forward in the University.³⁴ When he became bishop he associated with himself both Franciscans and Dominicans as his coadjutors in his episcopal office.³⁵ And not only so—he gladly welcomed, protected, and promoted their activity throughout his diocese at large, and did not shrink from

openly expressing his opinion, that by preaching and the confessional, by their example and their prayers, they were doing an inestimable amount of good in England, and compensating for the shortcomings and mischievous influence of the secular clergy.³⁶ In this matter Grossetête differed widely in judgment from many of his clergy, who looked upon it as an encroachment upon the pastoral office when a Dominican or Franciscan preached or heard confession in their parishes,³⁷ and did their utmost to keep back their flocks from listening to such sermons, or confessing to a begging friar. Bishop Grossetête, on the contrary, wrote on one occasion to Pope Gregory IX. as follows:—"O, if your Holiness could only see with what devotion and humility the people flock together to hear from them (the Mendicant monks) the word of life, and to make confession of their sins, and how much advantage the clergy and religion have derived from the imitation of their example, your Holiness would certainly say the people who wandered in darkness have seen a great light."³⁸ Accordingly he sought to induce the parochial clergy of his diocese to stir up their parishioners to frequent the sermons and the confessionals of the friars,—a proceeding which shows clearly enough that however highly he valued the pastoral office, and however zealously he laboured to further and to elevate it, he was still far from exalting it only for its own sake. In his view, the fear of God and the salvation of souls, as the ultimate ends which the spiritual office was designed to subserve, were of immeasurably higher account.

Grossetête's whole views, religious and ecclesiastical, are to be seen in their purest and truest expression in a Memorial, in which he set down all his complaints

concerning the disorders of the church of his time, and which he submitted in a personal audience to the Pope. The occasion of the memorial was this. The practice of what was called “appropriation” was becoming increasingly common, *i.e.*, the practice of transferring church tenures, tithe-rights, and glebe-lands, into the possession of monasteries, knightly orders, &c. This was a loss to local church property—an impoverishment of the parochial churches concerned. The parish lands were no longer in a condition to secure a living to the parish priest. The consequence was that a priest could no longer reside on the spot. The charge was only supplied from without, either from a cloister or at the cost of a knight commander, sometimes by one, sometimes by another priest or monk. In short, the office was neglected—the parish was spiritually orphanised. In his later years, Bishop Grossetête observed in his visitations that this evil was always on the increase. He saw in it an injury, not only to the pastoral office, but to the souls entrusted to it, which called for the most serious attention. The first step he took to remedy the mischief was to obtain a Papal authorisation, enabling him to declare all transferences and compacts of this kind to be null and void.

As soon as these full powers reached his hands, he called before him all the monks of his diocese who had been provided with these livings, and produced and read to them the Papal rescript. He was resolved, he said, to take over immediately into his own administration all those parish church-lands, the acquisition of which, with the consent of the Cathedral Chapter, the monasteries might not be able to establish by written documents. But experience proved that

the Papal authorisation was of little avail. It was only too easy to obtain exemptions by means of corruption at the Papal Court, and the well-meant intentions of the bishop were frustrated. But Grossetête was not the man to give way before such an obstacle. Regardless of his advanced age, he determined to make a second journey to Lyons, where Pope Innocent IV. was still residing, as he had been six years before. In the year 1250 he crossed the Channel with a numerous spiritual train. Arriving in Lyons, he experienced from the Curia a much cooler reception than he had done on the previous occasion, and in the main business which brought him he accomplished as good as nothing. He remained, however, the whole summer in Lyons, occupied with various affairs.

The men dont Know

In an audience obtained by him, 13th May, he handed to the Pope himself, and to three of the Cardinals in attendance, copies of the Memorial referred to in which he gave utterance to all that was in his heart. It was immediately read in the Pope's presence by Cardinal Otho, who had lived in England for some time as legate, and had come much into contact with Grossetête.

but the little girls understand

This Memorial has come down to us under the incorrect title of a sermon.⁴⁰ It is full of earnest moral zeal, and of fearless frankness of speech. Grossetête begins with the observation that zeal for the salvation of souls—the sacrifice most well-pleasing to God—had brought down to earth and humiliation the eternal Son of God, the Lord of glory. By the ministry of his Apostles and the pastors appointed by them among whom, above all others, the Pope bears the image of Christ, and acts as his representative, the kingdom of God came, and the house of God was made full. But at the present day, alas! the Church of Christ is sorely diminished

and narrowed; unbelief prevails in the greatest part of the world; in Christendom itself a considerable portion of it has been separated from Christ by division,⁴¹ and in the small remainder heresy goes on increasing in some quarters, and the seven deadly sins prevail in others; so that Christ has had for ages to complain, “Woe is me, for I am as when they have gathered the summer fruits, as the grape-gleanings of the vintage. There is no cluster to eat, my soul desired the first ripe fruit. The good man is perished out of the earth, and there is none upright among men.”

“But what is the cause of this hopeless fall of the church? Unquestionably the diminution in the number of good shepherds of souls, the increase of wicked shepherds, and the circumscription of the pastoral authority and power. Bad pastors are everywhere the cause of unbelief, division, heresy, and vice. It is they who scatter the flock of Christ, who lay waste the vineyard of the Lord, and desecrate the earth. No wonder, for they preach not the Gospel of Christ with that living word which comes forth from living zeal for the salvation of souls, and is confirmed by an example worthy of Jesus Christ; and to this they add every possible form of transgression,—their pride is ever on the increase, and so are their avarice, luxury, and extravagance;⁴² and because the life of the shepherds is a lesson to the laity, they became thus the teachers of all error and all evil. Instead of being a light of the world, they spread around, by their godless example, the thickest darkness and the icy coldness of death.

“But what, again, is the cause of this evil? I tremble to speak of it, and yet I dare not keep silence. The cause and source of it is the *Curia* itself! Not only because it fails to put a stop to these evils as it can and should, but still more, because, by its dispensations, provisions, and colla-

tions it appoints evil shepherds, thinking therein only of the living which it is able to provide for a man, and for the sake of that, handing over many thousands of souls to eternal death. He who commits the care of a flock to a man in order that the latter may get the milk and the wool, while he is unable or unwilling to guide, to feed, and protect the flock, such an one gives over the flock itself to death as a prey. That be far from him who is the representative of Christ! He who so sacrifices the pastoral office is a persecutor of Christ in his members. And since the doings of the Curia are a lesson to the world, such a manner of appointment to the cure of souls on its part, teaches and encourages all who have patronate rights to make pastoral appointments of a like kind, as a return for services rendered to themselves, or to please men in power, and in this way to destroy the sheep of Christ. And let no one say that such pastors can still save the flock by the ministry of middlemen. For among these middlemen many are themselves hirelings who flee when the wolf cometh. *Come on now*

“Besides, the cure of souls consists not only in the dispensation of the sacraments, in singing of “hours,” and reading of masses, but in the true teaching of the word of life, in rebuking and correcting vice; and besides all this, in feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, lodging the strangers, visiting the sick and the prisoners—especially among the parish priest’s own parishioners—in order, by such deeds of charity, to instruct the people in the holy exercises of active life; and to do such deeds is not at all in the power of these middlemen, for they get so small a portion of the church’s goods that they have scarcely enough to live upon.⁴³ In the midst of such evils men might still have the consolation of hoping that possibly

successors might follow who would better fulfil the pastor's calling. But when parish churches are made over to monasteries these evils are made perpetual. All such things end not in the upbuilding, but the destruction of the church. God defend that even the Holy See and its possessor should act against Christ, and thereby incur the guilt of apostacy and division! Further, the pastoral office, especially of the bishops, is at the present time circumscribed and restrained, particularly in England, and this in three ways. First, by the exemptions and privileges of monasteries, for when the inmates of these addict themselves outside their walls to the worst vices, the bishops can take no action against them—their hands are tied by the privileges of the convents. Secondly, the secular power puts obstacles in the way, in cases where investigations are made into the sins of laymen, in order to prevent other laymen from being sworn as witnesses. To which are to be added, thirdly, appeals to the Pope or Archbishop; for if the bishop takes steps according to his duty to punish vice and depose unworthy pastors, protest is taken, the "liberty" of the church is appealed to, and so the matter is delayed, and the action of the bishop lamed."

In conclusion, Grossetête invokes the Holy See to put a stop to all disorders of this character, and especially to put a check upon the excesses of its own courtiers, of which there were loud enough complaints, to leave off the unevangelical practice of using the interposition of the sword, and to root out the notorious corruption of the Papal Court. It was to be feared that the Holy See, unless it reformed itself without delay, would draw upon itself the heaviest judgments—yea, destruction itself. The Holy Father would not interpret as presumption what the author of this Memorial had ventured to lay before him in all devotion and humility, under many

misgivings and tears, and purely at the bidding of dread of the prophet's "Woe," and of a longing desire to see a better state of things. *Pretty baby*

This utterance can only call forth the deepest respect for the godly-mindedness of the author and for his burning zeal for God's house, for the salvation of souls, and the reformation of the church. But on the other hand, it can easily be understood that such unheard-of freedom of speech was not likely to obtain for the strong man who uttered it any favour or influence at the Papal Court. When Grossetête left Lyons in September, and arrived again at home at Michaelmas 1250, he was for some time so much out of spirits that he had some thoughts of resigning his episcopal office. However, matters did not go that length. He gathered up his strength again, and from that day forward acted only with all the more emphasis, and with all the less reference to the Pope and the Crown. His visitation of convents and parish churches was taken up again with, if possible, still greater strictness than before. Unworthy pastors were set aside, and in all places where there was need for it he appointed vicars in their room, who were supported out of the revenues, in virtue of an authorisation to that effect, which he at last obtained from the Pope.

In Parliament his voice carried with it decisive weight. In a letter of 1252 which he addressed to the nobles of the realm, to the citizens of London, and to the "Community" of England, he expressed himself strongly enough on the subject of the illegal encroachments of the Apostolic See, by which the country was drained.

But in the year of his death there occurred an incident which raised the name of the Bishop of Lincoln to the highest celebrity. Innocent IV. had conferred upon one of his

grandsons, Frederick of Lavagna (the Pope was himself a Count of Lavagna), a canonry in the Cathedral of Lincoln, and taken steps to have him immediately invested with it by a cardinal. From Perugia, on the 26th January 1253, an apostolic brief was addressed, not to the bishop, but to an Archdeacon of Canterbury, and to Magister Innocent, a Papal agent in England, with the distinct injunction to put the young man before named, in the person of his proxy, into actual possession of that dignity and living. And that there might be no delay, much less any obstacle put in the way, the Papal brief expressly set aside, in this instance, all and sundry opposing rights and statutes, even such as had received apostolic confirmation, nay, even all direct apostolic concessions to whomsoever given, and howsoever worded. Nor was this enough. In case any one should oppose himself to the carrying out of this injunction, either by word or deed, the Pope authorised his agents to call any such person immediately before them, so as within two months he should appear in person before the Pope and answer for himself to the challenge of Frederick of Lavagna. This, it was thought, had made failure impossible; every imaginable means of escape was cut off, every bolt was made sure, and yet the measure issued in failure after all.⁴⁷

The Bishop of Lincoln, though now eighty years old, was not accustomed to allow himself to be frightened. With all the energy which a sense of right springing from the holy feeling of duty inspires, he stood forward to object to the proceeding, and to withstand it; and the document in which he couched his opposition had not only an electric effect upon the English nation at the time, but its influence continued to be felt for centuries afterwards, and more than all his learning—more than all the services of his long,

active, and fruitful life—it made the name of the God-fearing, upright, and inflexible man popular and illustrious.

Grossetête had no thoughts of writing direct to the Pope himself; ⁴⁸ and this was not prudent merely, it was also due to his own dignity. Innocent had intentionally passed by the bishop, though the question related to a canonry in his own cathedral, and it was therefore in every way suitable and well considered, that the bishop on his side should leave the Pope entirely out of the game. He addressed himself exclusively to the Archdeacon of Canterbury, and to Magister Innocent.⁴⁹

In this celebrated paper he takes up the position, that in opposing himself to the demand in question, he is giving proof of his veneration and obedience to apostolic mandates, and of his zeal for the honour of the Roman Mother Church. For this demand is not an apostolical one, inasmuch as it is in contradiction to the teaching of the apostles and of Christ Himself. It is also totally irreconcileable with apostolic holiness, and this upon a double ground—first, because the “notwithstanding” (*non obstante*) of the brief, carries along with it a whole flood of inconsistency, recklessness, and deception, undermines truth and faith, and shakes to the centre all Christian piety, as well as all intercourse of confidence between man and man. In the second place, it is a thing entirely unapostolic and unevangelical, abhorred by Christ himself, and in the eyes of men nothing less than a sin of murder, when men’s souls, which should be brought unto life and salvation by means of the pastoral office, are destroyed by being deceived and defrauded in the matter of that very office. And this is what is done, when those who are appointed to a pastoral charge only use the milk and the wool of the sheep to satisfy their own bodily necessities, but

have no wish or purpose to fulfil the ministry of their office for the eternal salvation of the sheep of Christ. The most holy Apostolic See, to which Christ has given all power, "for edification, not for destruction" (1 Cor. x. 8), can command nothing which has such a sin for its issue. And a truly devoted subject of the Holy See can in no wise give heed to such a command, but must rather resist it with all his might. Such thoughts as this contemplated appointment, are in fact inspired by "flesh and blood, and not by the Father which is in heaven." *I want to ride.*

Such was the substance of this celebrated writing. The installation of the Pope's grandson into the canonry and prebend of Lincoln came to nothing, and the resolute bishop remained unmolested. So much we know for certain; and it may well be supposed that the men who were entrusted with the execution of the Pope's mandate, in the mortal difficulty which they were thrown into by the redoubtable protest of Grossetête, knew of nothing better to do than to forward it to Italy for the hand of the Pope, without a moment's delay. Matthew Paris, the Benedictine abbot of St. Alban's, who cannot, it is true, be accepted as an unprejudiced authority, says in his chronicle that Innocent IV. was almost beside himself with rage when he saw the letter. Who, he exclaimed, is that crazy, foolish, and silly old man who has the effrontery to sit in judgment thus upon my doings? Is not the King of England our vassal, yea, slave, who at a wink from us can shut him up in prison and send him to ruin? But the cardinals, and especially the cardinal deacon, Aegidius, a personal friend of the Bishop, are said to have quieted the Pope by representing to him "that it was of no avail to take severe measures against Grossetête, for to speak candidly, he was in the

right, and no man could condemn him. The bishop was orthodox and a very holy man; he was a more conscientious and holy man than they, the cardinals, were themselves. Among all the prelates he had not his match.⁵⁰ *you*

Whatever may be the truth of this account, it is certain that the bold answer of the bishop was ignored, and he was left in peace. Perhaps it was also remembered that he was now an old man, and that he could not much longer give any trouble. And so, in fact, it befell. In October of the same year, 1253, Grossetête had a serious seizure at Buckden, and on the 9th of the same month he died. On the 13th he was buried in the Cathedral of Lincoln. *sweat*

Soon after his decease, it began to be reported that on the night of his death, sounds of bells, indescribably beautiful, had been heard high in the air, and ere long men heard of miracles taking place at his tomb. Fifty years later it was proposed that he should be canonized, and the proposal came at one and the same time from the King, from the University of Oxford, and from the Chapter of St. Paul's. It was Edward I., in the last year of his reign, 1307, who made the suggestion;⁵¹ and in so doing, gave utterance to what was in the heart of the whole kingdom. But as may easily be supposed, the proposal did not meet with the most favourable acceptance at the Papal Court. The nation's wish was never complied with by the Curia, but none the less did the venerable bishop remain unforgotten in England, and his memory continue to be blessed through long centuries. His image was universally revered by the nation as an ideal—as the most perfect model of an honest Churchman. “Never for the fear of any man had he forborne to do any good action which belonged to his office and duty. If the sword had been unsheathed against him,

he stood prepared to die the death of a martyr." Such was the solemn testimony borne to him by his own University of Oxford, when it pleaded for his canonisation.

In the public estimation of England, Grossetête was, in point of fact, a saint. In the following century he appears to have been so regarded by Wiclif, who in numberless passages refers to him under the name of *Lincolniensis*.⁵³ And there is reason to think that this estimate was one not at all personal to Wiclif himself, but in harmony with the feeling of his countrymen at large. We have the testimony of Thomas Gascoigne, who died in 1457, that Grossetête was commonly spoken of by the people as St. Robert.⁵⁴ It was natural, too, that when, at a later period, the whole of western Christendom came to be strongly convinced of the necessity of a "Reformation in Head and Members," the memory of the bold and outspoken Bishop of Lincoln should have flamed up again brightly among the English friends of Church Reform. *little machine*

At that period an Anglican member of the Council of Constance, the Oxford divine, Henry Abendon, in a speech which he delivered before the Council, 27th October 1415, repeatedly referred as an authority to *Dominus Lincolniensis*; and on one occasion made express mention of the Memorial to the Pope which is mentioned above. As late as the year 1503, an English monk, Richard of Bardney, sung of Grossetête's life in a copy of Latin distiches, which conclude with an invocation of him in form as a canonised saint.⁵⁵ A fact like this, that Grossetête, in spite of the Papal refusal of his canonisation, continued to live for centuries in the mouth and the heart of the English people as "St. Robert," is a speaking proof of the change which had already come over the spirit of the

age; that the absolute authority of Papal decrees was already shaken; that the *nimbus* which surrounded the Holy See itself was paling. During the period when the Papal power was at its zenith, we can as little imagine the case of a man being venerated as a saint in a considerable portion of western Christendom, where canonisation had been positively refused by the Curia, as the converse case of a design on the part of Rome to canonise a churchman being upset by the opposition of a portion of the Catholic Church—an event which actually occurred when, in 1729, Benedict XIII. proposed to canonise Gregory VII., but was compelled to give up the idea out of regard to the decided declarations of France and Austria. *I'll be your chauffeur*

As Protestants, we have both a right and a duty to hold in honour the memory of a man like Grossetête. His creed, indeed, was not the pure confession of the Evangelical Churches; but his fear of God was so earnest and upright; his zeal for the glory of God was so glowing; his care for the salvation of his own soul and of the souls committed to him by virtue of his office was so conscientious; his faithfulness so approved; his will so energetic; his mind so free from man-fearing and man-pleasing; his bearing so inflexible and beyond the power of corruption,—that his whole character constrains as to the sincerest and deepest veneration. When, in addition, we take into view how high a place he assigned to the Holy Scriptures, to the study of which, in the University of Oxford, he assigned the first place as the most fundamental of all studies,⁵⁸ and which he recognises as the only infallible guiding star of the Church;⁵⁹ when we remember with what power and persistency, and with-

out any respect of persons, he stood forward against so many abuses in the Church, and against every defection from the true ideal of church-life; when we reflect that he finds the highest wisdom to stand in this—"To know Jesus Christ and him crucified" (1 Cor. 2-1)⁶⁰—it is certainly not saying too much when we signalise him as a venerable witness to the Truth, as a Churchman who fulfilled the duty which he owed to his own age, and in so doing lived for all ages; and who, through his whole career, gave proofs of his zeal for a sound reformation of the Church's life.

*I'll put a tiger baby,
in your sweet little
tank*

SECTION III.—*Henry Bracton and William Occam, and the Tone of Church Life and Politics in the 14th Century.*

A MAN of kindred spirit to Grossetête, though differing from him in important points, was Henry of Bracton, a younger contemporary of the celebrated Bishop of Lincoln.

Bracton, the greatest lawyer of England in the Middle Ages, was a practical jurist, but also a learned writer upon English Common Law.⁶¹ Both as a municipal judge and scientific jurist, he maintained the rights of the State in opposition to the Church, and sought to define as accurately as possible the limits of the secular and the spiritual jurisdictions. In particular, he treated as encroachments of the spiritual jurisdiction its claims of right in questions of patronage. On this point, it is true Bracton and Grossetête would hardly have been of one mind; but none the less they both stood upon common ground, in being decidedly national in their spirit and views, and in offering strenuous opposition to the aggressions of the Court of Rome.

Only a few years after Grossetête's death, contests arose on constitutional questions, in which the opposition of the barons was for some time in the ascendant. At the head of this party stood Simon of Montfort, Earl of Leicester, who had been a friend of Grossetête. In the year 1258, the Parliament of Oxford appointed an administration, which, while Henry III. continued nominally to reign, was to wield all the real power of the State; and it was by no means only the great barons of the kingdom who had a voice in this government. Earl Simon was the champion and hero of the lower clergy and the Commons, who stood behind him and his allied barons. The object in view was to put an end to arbitrary and absolute government, and to put in its place the rule of the Constitution, of Law, and of Right. The movement found its most powerful support in the Saxon population of the country. It was directed, not least, against the undue influence of foreigners upon public affairs. Under the powerful Edward I. (1272-1307) the kingdom again recovered its strength; and after the feeble, unfortunate reign of Edward II., national feeling was again roused by the French war of succession in the reign of Edward III. (1327-1377), when the nation gathered up its strength for the long wars with France, a struggle which had a powerful effect in developing both the national character and language.

What the kingdom had chiefly stood in need of was a higher authority and a more concentrated strength than had obtained under Henry III., and Edward I. was exactly the man to remedy that defect. He had made many concessions, it is true, to the estates of his kingdom in the matter of Parliamentary rights, under the repeated pressure of his

undertakings against Wales, Scotland, and the Continent; but he had done this without any loss to the Crown. On the contrary, the Crown had only been a gainer by the freedom and rights which had been guaranteed to the nation. It was now, for the first time, that the Crown entered into a compact unity with the nation, acquired a full national character, and became itself all the stronger thereby.

This immediately showed itself when Boniface VIII. attempted to interfere with the measures of the King against Scotland, as he had done a few years before in the transactions between England and France. In a bull, dated 27th June 1299, Boniface not only asserted his direct supremacy over the Scottish Church as a church independent of England, but also put himself forward, without ceremony, as arbiter of the claims which Edward I. was then advancing to the Scottish Crown. "If Edward asserted any right whatever to the kingdom of Scotland, or any part thereof, let him send his plenipotentiaries with the necessary documents to the Apostolic See; the matter will be decided there in a manner agreeable to right."⁶²

In resisting such assumptions the King found the most determined assistance in the spirit of the country itself. He laid the matter, with the necessary papers, before his Parliament, which met in Lincoln on 20th January 1301; and the representatives of the kingdom took the side of their King without reserve. The nobles of the realm sent, 12th February 1301, a reply to that demand of Boniface VIII., in which they repelled, in the most emphatic manner, the attempted encroachment: No fewer than 104 earls and barons, who all gave their names at the beginning of the document, and sealed it with their seals at the end, declared in it, not only in their own name, but also for the whole

community of England, “that they could feel nothing but astonishment at the unheard-of pretensions contained in the Papal brief. The kingdom of Scotland had never been a fief of the Pope, but from time immemorial of the English Crown; they had therefore, after mature consideration, with one voice resolved that the King should in no way acknowledge the Papal jurisdiction in this affair, yea, they would not even allow the King to acknowledge it if he were himself disposed to do so. In conclusion, they implored his Holiness, in the most respectful manner, to leave untouched the rights of their King, a monarch who was entirely devoted to the interest of the Church.”⁶³

It was not till later that Edward himself addressed a letter of great length to Boniface, in which he confined himself to a historical proof of his alleged rights to the Scottish Crown, and referred to the Pope’s claim of jurisdiction in the matter only in the briefest way, and only to decline and protest against it; and, in point of fact, the King went forward in his measures affecting Scotland without troubling himself further in any way about the claims of the Papal Court.

It was thus that the English Crown, by an appeal to the nation, successfully repelled the unrighteous aggression of the Roman Curia; and I know not if the fact has hitherto been sufficiently recognised by historians that England set an example in this business, which Philip le Beau of France only imitated a year later in his dispute with Boniface VIII., when, in April 1302, he assembled a national Parliament. It was also in imitation of the example of the English barons that the French nobles and the Third Estate protested, in a letter to the cardinals, against the Papal pretensions. If in this case the leaning of the King upon the nation issued in benefit to the Crown, no less, on the other side, did the

national attitude of the Government lend strength and emphasis to the patriotic spirit of the people. When Edward I., in the last year of his reign, proposed the canonisation of the universally venerated Bishop of Lincoln, he was only giving utterance to what was in the heart of the whole country, and the effect of the movement could only be to heighten and strengthen the interest of the nation in ecclesiastical affairs.

The ablest and most strongly-marked representative of this state of feeling in the first half of the fourteenth century was a man who was born in England, and trained under the influence of the English spirit, but who spent the later portion of his life on the Continent, partly in the University of Paris, and partly at the Court of the Emperor Louis of Bavaria. We refer to William of Occam, a man who, as a scholar, as a copious writer, as a dignitary of the Franciscan Order, and finally, as a strenuous leader of the opposition against the absolutism of the Papacy, took a position of great prominence in his day. His philosophical nominalism had a prophetic and national significance, inasmuch as it prepared the way for that inductive method of philosophising which was put forward several centuries later by able countrymen of his own, such as Francis Bacon, Thomas Hobbes, and John Locke.

But what chiefly concerns us here in Occam was his character as a keen and independent thinker on matters of the Church. It is not a little remarkable that along with several other men, his personal friends of Italian birth, he was brought into a position of bold opposition to the Papacy, and came in sight of many great and free ideas, entirely through his standing as a member and provincial of the Franciscan order. It was a trifling question of the

order, out of which was developed a grand world of thoughts.

In the year 1321 it came to the knowledge of a Dominican Inquisitor in Narbonne, in the south of France, that it was an opinion held by some that neither Christ nor his apostles had ever, either as individuals or as a society, been in possession of property. This proposition appeared to the Dominican to be heretical; but a learned Franciscan in that city, Berengar Taloni, maintained it to be perfectly orthodox, and, ere long, the whole Franciscan order, at a general chapter held in Perugia in June and July 1322, declared for the same view. Thus the point became a question of controversy between the two great Mendicant orders.

On an appeal being carried to the Papal See in Avignon, a decision was given on the side of the Dominicans. John XXII. (1316-1334) in truth was as far removed from apostolic poverty as the east is from the west. He kept his eye so steadily upon the interest of the Papal treasury, that twenty-five millions of gold crowns in coin and jewels were found in it after his death. Of course, such a chief of the Church could not be suspected to look upon absolute poverty as a requirement of Christian perfection. He would have preferred, indeed, to avoid giving a decision on the question which was at issue between the two Orders. But that was impossible. The controversy would admit neither of silence nor delay. A decision clear and round—yea or nay—was unavoidable.

In the year 1322-1324, the Pope pronounced against the Franciscans in a series of bulls. The two first (*Quia non nunquam*, and *Ad Conditorem Canonum*), published in 1322, were only of a preparatory character. The third constitu-

tion of 1323 (*Cum inter nonnullos*) contained the decision upon the principle involved, declaring the proposition that Christ and his apostles were never either singly or collectively holders of property to be contrary to Scripture and erroneous. And, last of all, in 1324 followed two more bulls; in the Constitution, *Quia quorundam*, the Pope pronounced sentence of excommunication upon the opposers of his determination; and in the bull, *Quia vir reprobis*, he rejected the appeal of Michael of Cesena, the general of the Order.

The majority of the Franciscan order now bowed to the decision, and after some years elected another general. But those who had stood forth as the firmest defenders of the doctrine of apostolic poverty withheld their submission. They left Avignon; and William of Occam, Michael of Cesena, and Bonagratia of Bergamo attached themselves, in 1328, to the service of Emperor Louis the Bavarian.

Out of this conflict between the Papal Court and the Minorites ideas developed themselves which were of the greatest importance, and which made their influence felt in succeeding centuries; and of all the polemical writings produced by the repulsed and banished Franciscans, those of Occam were by far the richest in substance. While Michael of Cesena confined himself chiefly to personal polemics of defence and attack, Occam's writings, published several years later, though not altogether silent on topics of this nature, are in the main occupied with the substance of the great objective questions in dispute; and his investigations possess, in this way, a value and width of bearing which far outgo what was of mere ephemeral interest.

This discussion, indeed, makes a highly mixed impression upon an evangelical reader who follows it after the lapse of more than 500 years. Who can miss seeing that the Franciscan, in his deep contemplation of the life of Jesus and the apostolic age, unconsciously looks at the Redeemer and his apostles from the stand-point of the begging friar, and conceives of them in a thoroughly monkish and ascetic manner. In opposing such a view, John XXII. was not without good ground to stand upon. But unquestionably the Pope fell into an error very much greater himself. Not so unconsciously, perhaps, as his opponent, he carried over to primitive Christianity the conditions of his own age, and influenced by his own interests, he allowed himself to justify, by the example of the Redeemer and the precedent of the apostles, the whole hierarchical system of his own time, richly endowed and secularised in spirit as it was, including even the territorial possessions of the Holy See, and its well-filled treasury. And therein, no doubt, the Pope was in the wrong, and Occam, his adversary, in the right.

The deepest ground, however, of the unsparing antagonism of the Roman Court to the stringent principles of the Franciscans was, in truth, no other than this,—that the Popes felt that the spirit of world-abnegation which animated these men, was a tacit censure of their own spirit and habit of life; from which again sprang “the hatred of the evil conscience.” But it was the very persecutions which this hatred prompted which served, in the course of time, to bring to full light and ripeness all the principles touching the spirituality of Christ’s kingdom, which at first still lay in a deep slumber, and had only dimly revealed themselves to the presaging feeling

of a few men of a better spirit than their contemporaries. Occam's whole exposition on the subject of the kingdom of Christ being not an earthly but a heavenly and eternal kingdom—that Christ is indeed as to his Godhead, King, and Lord over all, but, as God-man, only King of his believing people, and in no respect the administrator of a worldly government—is a Scriptural critique in effect of the mediæval hierarchy—an unconscious evangelical protest against the Papacy in that form which it had assumed since the days of Gregory VII.

But, on the other hand, Occam's protest against Papal absolutism—against the assertion of an unlimited *plenitudo potestatis* of the Pope—is the result of clear, self-conscious, profound reflexion. He declares it to be totally erroneous, heretical, and dangerous to souls, to maintain that the Pope, by the ordinance of Christ, possesses unlimited power, both spiritual and temporal. For if this were so, he might depose princes at his pleasure—might, at his pleasure, dispose of the possessions and goods of all men. We should all be the Pope's slaves; and in spiritual things the position would be the same. In that case the law of Christ would bring with it an intolerable slavery, much worse than the Old Testament ever knew; whereas the Gospel of Christ, in comparison with the old covenant, is a law of liberty. In this connection Occam opposes, in the most emphatic manner, the assertion of some flatterers of the Roman Court, that the Pope has power to make new articles of faith; that he is infallible; that into no error, no sin of simony can he possibly fall. He starts from the general principle, that the whole hierarchy, including the Papal Primacy, is not an immediately Divine, but only a human order. In one place he even gives expression to the bold thought, that it would, to the general

body of believers, be of more advantage to have several primates or chief priests (*summi pontifices*), than to have one only; the unity of the Church does not depend upon there being only one *summus pontifex*; the danger of moral corruption of the whole body is much greater with only one head than with several.

In the event of a Pope becoming heretical, every man must have the competency to be his judge, but his ordinary judge is the Emperor. But the Church at large also has jurisdiction over the Pope in such an event, and hence also a General Council, as the representative of the whole Church; the bishops, in case of need, may even depose him. Here we have a practical question anticipated, which some sixty years later became a burning question in Christendom, and not only raised but determined precisely as it was one day to be solved in actual fact.

Further, in solving the doubt, whether a Council, in case of necessity, could assemble without Papal sanction, Occam came upon thoughts entirely his own. Every society (*communitas*) and corporation can enact laws for itself, and elect individuals to act for the whole body (*vice gerant*). Now, all believers are one body and one society (Rom. xii. 5); it is competent for them, therefore, to choose representatives of the whole body. When those thus elected meet together, they form a General Council of the whole of Christendom. He conceives of the carrying out of such a Council in this manner—that from every parish one or more should be sent to the synod of the diocese, or to the Parliament of the prince. This assembly proceeds to another election, and the meeting of all those chosen by the Diocesan Synods, or the Parliaments, constitutes the General Council. That is not a Papal Curial Synod, neither is it a church

assembly constituted upon hierarchical principles; it is a Synod framed upon the parochial principle.

And yet it is not Occam's meaning to advise a leap from the ground of the absolute and sole domination of the Papacy to that of an unconditioned parochial principle, as if this latter contained in it all the safe-guards of truth and weal. No; only to the Church itself as a whole, but not to any part of it (and every council is only a part of it), is the promise given that it can never fall into any error contradictory to the faith. Although all the members of a General Council should fall into error, the hope would not need, on that account, to be surrendered, that God would reveal His truth unto babes (Matt. xi. 25), or would inspire men who already knew the truth to stand forth in its defence. And such an occurrence must issue in glory to God, for thereby He would show that our faith does not rest upon the wisdom of men, such as are called to a General Council, but upon the Power who has sometimes chosen "the foolish things of the world to confound the wise" (1 Cor. i. 27). In another place Occam expresses the thought that it is even possible that on some occasion the whole male sex, clergy as well as laity, might err from the faith, and that the true faith might maintain itself only among pious women. We see where all this is tending to. High above the Pope, and high above the Church itself, in Occam's view, stands Christ the Lord. "The Head of the Church and its foundation is one—Christ alone." Occam is conscious that his contention is for Christ and for the defence of the Christian faith.

It makes a touching and deeply mournful impression, to look into Occam's heart, as he opens it in the following confession:—

"The prophecy of the Apostle, 2 Tim. iv. 3, is now being
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fulfilled. Chief Priests and Elders, Scribes and Pharisees, are acting now-a-days exactly as they did then when they put Jesus on the cross. They have banished me and other honourers of Christ to Patmos. Yet we are not without hope. The hand of the Lord is not shortened yet. We live in trust in the Most High that we shall yet one day return with honour to Ephesus. But should the will of God be otherwise, still I am sure that neither death nor life, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, or draw us away from the defence of the Christian faith."

By the side of this testimony of pious, joyful trust in God, we place a passage where Occam speaks of the value of his own writings and their importance for the future. This occurs in his *Dialogue*, at the point where he passes on to a discussion which we may describe as a piece of political philosophy. Here he puts into the mouth of the scholar in the *Dialogue* the following words addressed to his master:— “Although we are unable at present to produce a complete work on the subject, as no treatise upon it, to my knowledge, has ever hitherto been attempted by any other writer, still it was useful not to be altogether silent upon a subject of so much importance, that we may stir up others who have the command of books, to produce complete works upon it. My meaning is this, that by means of our essay men of future times who are zealous for truth, righteousness, and the common weal, may have their attention drawn to many truths upon these matters which, at the present day, remain concealed from rulers, councillors, and teachers, to the loss of the common weal.”

Nor, in point of fact, was this saying too much. For Occam, along with the small group of like-minded inde-

pendent thinkers with whom he was associated, represents a high flight of human thought which did not pass uselessly overhead like a transient meteor, but worked upon the minds of men with a kindling power. Out of a mere question affecting a religious order, developed itself an unimagined life-force, an antagonism to the Papacy as a centralising world-power, still blended, it is true, with ascetic convictions, and even deriving its moral strength from these, and still only half conscious of the extent of its own bearings, but none the less an antagonism to the Papacy, which in its positive kernel was a contention for Christ as the alone Head of the Church. In this conflict of minds by thrust and counter-thrust there were kindled sparks of evangelical thought and feeling, and there were struck out new lights of political truth, which proved of use and advantage to succeeding generations, and rendered essential service to progress in the direction of an evangelical renovation of the Church.

In the meanwhile, however, it will be easily understood, that ideas and sentiments like these, so far outrunning the current century, could not pass at once into the blood of the existing generation. In the first instance, only what concerned the autonomy of the State, in opposition to the Curia, was grasped and realised by the English nation during the fifty years' reign of Edward III. (1327-1377). Even the foreign wars, which fill up so large a portion of this period, were constrained to help to this end. Not, indeed, the expeditions against Scotland, which followed one after another during the first seven years, but none the less the French wars of succession which Edward III. commenced in 1339. These foreign relations had a reaction upon the domestic; the wars rendered necessary increased subsidies, and these

were voted by the estates of the realm represented in Parliament, only at the price of assured political rights and franchises, as, *e.g.*, in the Parliament of 1341. But the more closely Crown and Parliament held together, the more resolutely they opposed themselves to all foreign attempts. This the Papal Court was compelled to feel acutely, and all the more that the Court at Avignon was seen to be dependent upon the same France with which England was at war.

When Clement VI., immediately after his accession to the Holy See, endeavoured to make peace between Edward III. of England and Philip VI. of France, he succeeded, indeed, so far as to bring about a truce for a time; but as early as Easter 1343, with the full assent of his Parliament, Edward roundly declined all official intervention of the Pope as head of the church; only as a private individual and personal friend should Clement attempt a mediation.

But still more deeply felt than this declinature was the determination with which King and Parliament repudiated the Pope's nominations to English livings in favour of foreign prelates and priests. It is well known that the Popes of Avignon went far beyond the earlier Popes in draining the finances of the national churches. But, on the other side, there had also been no small growth of courage and resolution in opposing such abuses. In England, at least, the *provisions* granted by the Pope to foreign clergy were barred in the most effectual manner. When Clement VI. had granted to two newly-made cardinals—one of them his own grandson—*provisions* to English dignities and incomes worth in all 2000 marks yearly, the barons, knights, and burgesses of the realm, in Parliament assembled at Westminster, 18th May 1343, joined in

an open letter to the Pope, in which they respectfully, but in a firm tone, begged for the removal of the scandal which was given by reservations, provisions, and nominations to English dignities and livings, and which had become greater under Clement than ever before. They urged that the numerous rich endowments of their country had been designed for the upholding of God's service, for the furthering of the Christian faith, and for the benefit of the poor parishioners, and were intended only for such men as had been thoroughly instructed for their office, and who were able, in particular, to hear confessions in the mother tongue. On the other hand, by the appointment of strangers and foreigners, in some cases even of enemies of the kingdom, ignorant of the language of the country, and of the conditions of those among whom it was their duty to exercise the pastoral care, the souls of the parishioners are put in jeopardy; the spiritual cure is neglected; the religious feelings of the people impaired; the worship of God abridged; the work of charity diminished; the means of bringing forward young men of merit crippled; the wealth of the kingdom carried off to foreign parts; and all this in opposition to the design of the founders.⁶⁴

Nor did men stop at mere representations of the case. When the cardinals referred to sent their agents to England to exercise their new rights and collect the revenues, these men fared badly enough. The population laid violent hands upon them; the king's officers put hindrances in the way of their proceedings; they were thrown into prison; and in the end were driven out of the country with insult and shame. The Pope with his own hand wrote to King Edward from Villeneuve, near Avignon, 28th August

1343, complaining of these proceedings, and requiring the King to interfere to put a stop to what was so "unreasonable."⁶⁵

But Clement had ill success in this step. The King sent a reply which was by no means conciliatory, but called upon the Pope with great emphasis to do away with the practice of "Provisions." He referred to an urgent petition which he had received from the last Parliament, praying that a speedy stop might be put to "impositions" of that kind, which were intolerable to the country; it was no more than the fact, he remarked, that these measures were fitted to inflict injury upon the kingdom in more ways than one, which he pointed out in terms partly borrowed from the Parliament's petition. In addition, he brings into view the violation of right which was involved in these provisions and reservations of the Curia: the right of patronage and collation belonging to the Crown and its vassals is thereby infringed; the jurisdiction of the Crown in questions of patronate right is ignored; by the export of money, as well as by the deterioration of the priesthood, the kingdom is weakened;—on all which accounts he turns himself to the successor of the Prince of the Apostles, who received from Christ the command to *feed* the Lord's sheep, and not to fleece them, to strengthen his brethren, and not to oppress them, with the urgent entreaty that this burden of "Provisions" may be taken away; that the patrons may have the use of their patronate rights; that the chapters may exercise, without hindrance, the right of election; that the rights of the Crown may remain without injury; and that the former long-descended devotion of England to the holy Roman Church may again revive.⁶⁶

But in Avignon men did not readily give ear to representations of this sort, let them be ever so well grounded. The

abuse went on as before, as far as was practicable, and the nation was at last convinced that the Papal Court was not in the least disposed to abandon a practice which was so profitable to itself. A resolution was come to to take the matter into their own hand, and to put a stop to these usurpations by the legislature of the kingdom. In 1350, the King, with consent of his Parliament, enacted a severe penal law against all who in any way should take part in the filling up of church-offices, injuriously to the rights of the King, or of the chapters or private patrons concerned. Every act of this kind was declared null and void; all offenders in this sort were threatened with fines and imprisonment; and all appeals against the same to foreign tribunals prohibited. This was the “Statute of Provisors;”⁶⁷ which was followed three years later by another penal act, which is commonly called simply the “Praemunire;”⁶⁸ which among other things was directed against the abuse of carrying appeals to the Pope from the English courts on questions of personal property. The law threatened offenders in this kind for the future with fine and imprisonment.

In connection with this legislation against “Provisions,” we naturally recall again to mind the form of the venerable Bishop of Lincoln, who, exactly one century earlier, had manfully resisted the like encroachments, and whose spirit seemed now to inspire the whole nation. It was the same spirit, in fact, which animated Wiclit from the commencement of his public career—who attained to manhood just at this time—the spirit of national independence boldly opposing a course of proceeding which made use of church affairs as a handle for other ends. It was no unchurchly spirit which lay at the bottom of this opposition. The very contrary was the truth. It was no mere phrase-making,

still less any hypocritical dissimulation, when Edward III., at the close of the document quoted above, said of himself and his subjects, “We all desire to render to your most holy person and to the holy Roman Church the honour which is due from us.”⁶⁶ Only this honour rendered to the Church was not blind and unconditioned: it was manly and dignified, and was prepared, in case of need, to oppose the head of the Church himself, not only in word but in deed, in matters affecting the Church’s temporalities.

In reference to this church-spirit of England, it is a significant and important circumstance, that up to a period later than the middle of the thirteenth century no sects and divisions had ever arisen in the National Church, nor any departures of any sort from the characteristic form of the Church of the West. We find no certain trace to show that during all the mediæval centuries, down to that time, any form of native heresy had ever sprung up upon the English soil.⁷⁰ Nor even were foreign heretical sects ever able to find a footing in England, however much, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries especially, these sects spread and propagated themselves on the Continent. Only two instances are mentioned by the chroniclers of such heretics appearing in England, and in both cases they were immediately put down and extinguished.

In the first instance, under the reign of Henry II., in the year 1159, there arrived in the country a party of 30 persons of both sexes, apparently Low Germans, under the leadership of a certain Gerhard; but having soon fallen under suspicion of heresy, they were imprisoned and tried before a Synod in Oxford, by which they were found guilty, and delivered over to the secular arm. Their punishment was to be branded upon the forehead, to be flogged through the streets, and

then, in their wounds and half-naked, to be driven out in winter into the open fields, where, without food and shelter, outcasts from all society, and by all men unpitied, they were left miserably to perish. But they met their fate with joy notwithstanding; they sang aloud, “Blessed are ye that are persecuted for righteousness sake, for yours is the kingdom of heaven.” But the monkish chronicler, heartlessly enough, makes the following comment upon the incident:—“This pious severity not only purified the kingdom of the plague which had already crept into it, but, by striking terror into the heretics, guarded against any future irruption of the evil.”⁷¹ Between forty and fifty years later, however, at the beginning of the thirteenth century, under the reign of John, as a later writer briefly informs us, several Albigenses came into England and were burnt alive.

That such merciless procedure should in the end act as a deterrent may be easily understood; and, in particular, to the Waldenses, who never seem to have made their way into England. At least, Peter of Pilichdorf, who wrote in 1444 against the Waldenses, attests that, with some other countries, England had always remained entirely pure and free from the Waldensian sect.⁷³ And I find an indirect confirmation of this in the circumstance, that in all the writings of Wiclf which I have searched through in manuscript, I have never come upon a single trace to indicate that either in his own time, or in earlier centuries, heretics of any kind had made their appearance in England. Even the Waldenses are not once historically referred to by him, or so much as named. It is without all support, therefore, from original sources, when some writers put forth the conjecture that there were secret disciples of the Waldensian doctrines in England in Wiclf's time, who

only came publicly into view when emboldened by his movement and the number of his followers.

If there had been any foundation for this conjecture the opponents of Wiclif and his party would certainly not have omitted to make use of such a fact, which they could so easily have turned to their own advantage. They would in that case have pilloried the Lollards as the adherents of a sect already long ago condemned by the Church. But of this, too, there is not a single trace. On the contrary, one of the earliest opponents of the Lollards, in a polemical poem written soon after Wiclif's death, freely admits that England, which now favours the Lollards, had hitherto been free of all stain of heresy, and of every form of error and deception.⁷⁵ In a word, it is irreconcilable with the known facts of history to attempt to bring the inner development of Wiclif or his followers into connection with any earlier manifestation of heresy on the European continent. And, in England itself, the history of the centuries before Wiclif has not a single manifestation of the heretical kind to show which was of any continuance or of any importance.

It is no doubt true that in the intellectual, moral, ecclesiastical, and political character of the period in which Wiclif's youth and early manhood fell, there were elements which exercised influence upon him, and received from him in turn a further development. These, however, were all elements which were compatible with true zeal for the existing Church, and with a sincere devotion to the Papal See; being, on the one hand, a certain national self-includedness, favoured by insular position, but fostered still more by the spirit of Saxon nationality, which was evoked so powerfully during the thirteenth and

fourteenth centuries, till it stood out conspicuously in the compact, united consciousness of the whole nation; on the other hand, a spirit of independence which did not shrink from defending the rights and interests of the nation and the National Church, even against all the power of the Papal See, and to wage open war against the abuses of the Church. In a word, there awoke in the Anglican Church of the thirteenth, and still more of the fourteenth centuries, “the true Reformation spirit which can never die out in the Church, but must rather from time to time break forth afresh with rejuvenescent strength, in order to remove the ever recurring rust of abuses and mischiefs.”⁶⁷

SECTION IV.—*Richard of Armagh and the Mendicant Orders.*

WE must at this point recall the name of an important man in whom this Reformation spirit had a vigorous vitality—an older contemporary of Wiclif, to whom, as to Grossetête, he often refers, and with whom he has sometimes been placed in a closer connection than can, in our judgment, be historically justified. We refer to Archbishop Richard, of Armagh, Primate of Ireland, who had a high celebrity in his day.

Richard Fitzralph studied in Oxford, under Dr. John Bakonthorpe, who was an opponent of the Mendicant Orders, and in whose steps his disciple is alleged to have walked.* Fitzralph was recommended to Edward III. as a man of high ability, and was promoted to be Archdeacon of Lichfield; in 1333 he became Chancellor of the University of Oxford; and finally, in July 1347, Archbishop of Armagh. The only side on which he is still known at the present day is as the practical Churchman, especially in connection with his

* See Additional Note at the end of the Introduction.

opposition to the encroachments of the Mendicant Orders. But in his own age and in following times he was also held in high honour as a master of theological science. The reason why nothing is now known of him in this character is, that none of his dogmatic and polemical writings have ever been sent to the press.

But in addition to theological lectures delivered in Oxford, he left important writings behind him. Among these we are told not only of a commentary on the sentences of Peter Lombard, originating in his Oxford lectures, but also of several apologetico-polemical works, directed partly against Judaism—*De intentionibus Judæorum*—partly against the Armenian Church. The latter work, his nineteen books against the errors of the Armenians, called also his *Sunma*, was the principal dogmatic work of “Richard of Armagh,” as he was commonly called, or simply “*Armachanus*;” and Wiclif himself cites the books against the Armenians with extraordinary frequency. Richard composed this work under Pope Clement VI., about 1350, at the request of several Armenian Bishops. For since 1145, the Armenian Kings had entered into transactions and connections with Rome, which had for their aim a union of the National Church of Armenia with the Roman Church of the west. At the beginning of the fourteenth century several synods of the Armenians were held in Sis, the ancient Issus, in 1307, and in Atan (Adana) in 1316, with a view to this union. In this connection the learned Englishman wrote the extensive work referred to,⁷⁷ at the instance of the Armenian John, bishop-elect of Khelat, and his brother Nerses, Archbishop of Manaz-Kjerd. Richard accordingly threw his book into the form of a dialogue. John, the bishop-elect, proposes questions, and brings forward objections. Richard

himself answers and solves them. In the first six books are handled the Christological and Trinitarian doctrines; the seventh defends the Primacy of Rome; four books—8 to 11—are devoted to the Doctrine of the Sacraments; the 12th and following to the Doctrine of the Last Things; the five remaining books closing with philosophico-theological investigations of a general kind, which form the basis of the whole work.⁷⁸

We are told that Richard left behind him a translation of the Bible in the Irish tongue, which would have been an important fact if it had been well attested, but the allegation rests upon insufficient evidence.⁷⁹

But we have trustworthy information on the position taken up by the Irish Primate against the Mendicant orders. The following circumstances gave rise to this incident as related by himself:—Having occasion to come to London on the business of his Archbishoprick, he found that learned men there were engaged in animated discussions upon the question of the poverty of the life of Jesus, and whether He had even begged. This was no doubt an after effect of the debate formerly maintained between Pope John XXII. and a party of the Franciscans.⁸⁰ The Archbishop was repeatedly asked to preach in London upon the subject, and in the church of St. Paul he delivered seven or eight sermons in English, in which he set forth and maintained the propositions following:—

1. Jesus Christ, during His sojourn upon earth, was indeed always a poor man; but
2. He never practised begging as His own spontaneous choice.
3. He never taught any one to beg.
4. On the contrary, Jesus taught that no man should practice voluntary begging.

5. No man can either prudently or holily determine to follow a life of mendicancy.

6. Mendicancy forms no part of the rule of the Franciscans.

7. The Bull of Alexander IV. (of the year 1255) against a certain book (the *Introductorius in Evangelium eternum*) is not directed against any of the above propositions.

8. For the purposes of confession, the parish church is always more suitable for the parishioner than any church or chapel of the begging monks.

9. For hearing confessions the parish priest is always preferable to the begging monk.

These nine propositions evidently fall into two groups. The first group—1 to 7—treats entirely of the moral question, in what “Apostolical Poverty” consists; in particular, whether begging, in its proper sense, is permitted to Christian men, and is in itself a virtue—yea or nay. The second group, consisting of the two last propositions, relates to the ecclesiastical question, whether it is advisable and right that parishioners should confess in a conventional church to a mendicant monk, instead of going to their parish church and parish priest. In both respects the high-placed dignitary expressed himself in opposition to the Mendicants, to their principles and to their privileges. No wonder that he was attacked in consequence. The Mendicant Orders raised accusations against him at the Papal Court, and he found himself obliged to undertake a journey to Avignon in 1357, and to prosecute his defence in person before Innocent VI. It is not improbable that the Irish Primate acted not only for himself, but in name and by commission of several English bishops; at least Wiclif mentions the rumour that the bishops in general had contributed to defray his travelling charges, etc.⁸¹ The address which he delivered at a solemn sitting

of the Council, 8th November 1375, in presence of the Pope and Cardinals, affords us some insight into his ecclesiastical views.⁸² His contention is simply one for the rights of the pastoral office as against the privileges of the Begging Orders, by which these rights were infringed—a contest which was renewed in France about fifty years later, in 1409 and following years.⁸³

The first and by far the larger half of the discourse must be regarded as containing the main gist of the whole. It is this part which has procured for it the title, “A Defence of the Parish Priests;” for the second part, only a fourth of the whole, is taken up with the proof and justification of the first seven propositions quoted above. The preacher lays the main stress of his argument against mendicancy upon the fact, which he proves in a very convincing manner, that the Redeemer, during His life on earth, was neither a mendicant Himself nor ever taught His disciples to be such. His most weighty objection against the principles which he opposes lies, if we are not mistaken, in the assertion that the notion of voluntary mendicancy rests only upon ignorance of the Scriptures, or upon the covetous pretext that the practice is conformable to the life of Christ.⁸⁴ But he takes up first the two last of those nine propositions, *i.e.*, the question of Confession and of the privileges of the Begging Orders, and he gives his reason for doing so at the beginning of his discourse. He does so, because a matter which is of common interest to the whole priesthood, yea, to all Christendom, takes precedence of a matter of private interest, whereas the principle of mendicancy is only a private affair of the Begging Orders. To guard himself, however, against misapprehension, as if he meant to assail the Begging Orders *on principle*, he not only enters a caveat

at the very commencement of his discourse against any possible suspicions of his orthodoxy, but also against the surmise that his aim was to attack the whole position of the Orders which had received the sanction of the Church. What he aimed at was no more than this, that these orders should be restored to the purity of their original foundation.⁸⁵ In other words, it was their reformation he sought, not their suppression.⁸⁶

With regard to confession, the archbishop shows most convincingly that it is much more suitable, and, on moral grounds, much more advisable that confession should be made to one's own parish priest (*sacerdos ordinarius*) than to a begging monk; for the former stands much nearer than the latter to any member of his own parish coming to confess, and has personal knowledge both of the man and his previous sins; and naturally such a man has more feeling of shame before one whom he sees every day, than before a stranger whom perhaps he sees face to face only once a year. It may also so easily happen, for want of personal knowledge of people, that a monk receiving confessions may absolve persons who are under the ban of excommunication. The speaker attests that in his own diocese, where perhaps there are not fewer than two hundred persons under excommunication for murders, fire-raisings, thefts, and such like crimes, there are only forty at most of these who come for confession to him, or the confessors under him. People of this description prefer to confess to the begging friars, and are at once absolved and admitted to communion by them.⁸⁵

On the other hand, the archbishop urges that the parish priest is a more righteous judge, and less subject also to suspicion of avaricious motives, for he has his parish living,

which the begging monk has not. Let it only be remembered that the Mendicant orders since the time when they obtained the privilege of hearing confessions, have built everywhere the most beautiful monasteries and truly princely palaces, which, before that time, they were in no condition to do. It is never heard that they impose alms upon those who confess to them, for the repairs of a parish church or a bridge, or for the upholding of a country road; they prefer to impose them entirely for their own benefit and that of their order.

But he goes still farther. It is not only the abuse of their privileges which is the cause of manifold moral mischiefs, but the very existence and normal effect of these rights viewed by themselves, and apart from all their misuse. These rights are injurious to those who go to confession, because such persons are less ashamed of their sins before strangers, and pay no regard to contrition, which is the chief part of the sacrament of penance, and are led besides to undervalue their parish priests. They are injurious to the parish priests, by estranging from them their own parishioners to such a degree that the latter soon cease to have any personal knowledge of them. The mischief even extends to the spiritual order at large. For the begging monks know how to draw to themselves young men at the universities and elsewhere by means of the confessional; they entice them into their orders, and never allow them to leave again; even during the years of novitiate they permit them to have interviews with parents at most only in presence of a brother of the monastery. One day not long ago, on going out from his inn to the street, the archbishop met with a respectable English gentleman who had made a journey to Avignon for no

other purpose but to obtain from the Curia the surrender of his son, whom the begging friars of Oxford had inveigled last Easter, though yet only a boy thirteen years old. When the father hurried to Oxford to rescue him, he was only permitted to speak with his son under the eyes of several monks. "What is this but man-stealing, a crime worse than cattle-stealing, which is a penal offence?" And this with mere children, before they have come to years of discretion!

And let it not be said such youngsters will serve God afterwards with all the more devotion, and therefore it is allowable to gain them by promises and lies. People "must not do evil that good may come" (Rom. iii. 8). No lie, in particular, is allowable for a good end, and no man, for any reason of his own invention, is at liberty to set aside any of the commandments. The theft, and the teaching which helps to it, are both mortal sins. It has come to such a pass in England that laymen no longer send their sons to the universities, but prefer to make farmers of them, rather than run the risk of losing them in that fashion; and hence it is that whereas in the preacher's time there were 30,000 students in Oxford, there are now no more than 6000. And this is a great mischief for the clergy in particular, though in every faculty alike the secular students (*i.e.*, non-monks) are constantly on the decrease, while the begging orders have been making no end of gains, both in the number of their converts and their members.

Add to this that it is now almost impossible to purchase good books at the universities, for they are all bought up by the mendicants; in all their convents are to be found large and valuable libraries. The Archbishop himself had sent three or four of his parish priests at a time to the university, but in every instance one at least of these had

left and come back again, because they found it impossible to get a Bible to buy, or any other theological book. And thus, in the end, he thinks, there will cease to be any clergy, and faith will entirely die out in the Church. In the creation everything was ordered by measure, number, and weight (*Wisdom of Solomon*, xi. 22), but it is astounding how the Mendicant orders go on increasing beyond all measure, in the teeth of nature's law. How injurious the rights of the begging order were to the Christian people, the preacher depicts from the life. Already, says he, neither great nor small can any more take a meal without the friars being of the party; and not standing at the door, as might be supposed, to beg for alms, but pushing into the houses without ceremony. Yes! and they not only eat with the guests, but carry off bread, and meat, and cheese along with them; and quite in the face of Christ's express command, they go from hall to hall, from house to house.

But lastly, these privileges work mischief even to the mendicant friars themselves. For they lead them into disobedience of their own Rules, and cause them to fall into greed and avarice and ambitious aspiration after vain honours and dignities. As to the first, the preacher instances several violations of the original Franciscan Rule, which had all arisen from their later-obtained privileges and exemptions. But the friars are also guilty of avarice, for they have acquired only such rights as enable them to accumulate wealth. If it were not their aim to make money, they would at least hand over the burial dues, when funerals occur among them, to the parish churches and the parish priests; but this is what they never do, and their covetousness must be to blame for it. The right of hearing confessions, too, they exercise with the same view. They receive the secret con-

fessions of women, even of princesses; and there are even instances of their finding their way into the boudoirs of the most beautiful women of noble rank—scandals, these, enough which come of the abuse of the Confessional.

Although these privileges have been conferred upon them by Papal authority, they cannot continue to make use of them without mortal sin. Neither can they sincerely repent of these sins without making restitution, as far as they can, of the rights which they have taken away from the parish priests. In this connection, as in support of all his other representations, Richard of Armagh repeats the Bible-text which he has prefixed to his whole discourse, “Judge not according to the outward appearance, but judge righteous judgment.”

The good man spoke out with frankness and courage. He displays in his sermons much dialectical skill and culture, and a solid and ripe theological erudition. But more than all, he is penetrated by a spirit of intense moral earnestness and of true manhood. Richard of Armagh has the spirit of a Reformer, in the noblest sense; he is a man who fights against modern degeneracy and ecclesiastical abuses with combined wisdom and zeal; with eye uplifted to Christ, and with the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.⁸⁶

From this point let us cast a look backwards to Grossetête, and another forward to Wiclit. Richard of Armagh, and Robert of Lincoln, were in many respects men of kindred spirit, and yet in reference to the Mendicant orders all but antipodes; for the former attacked them and the latter patronised and promoted them. But let the times in which they lived be distinguished, and the two men come nearer in character to each other. At the time when Grossetête became a bishop—in the second quarter of the thirteenth

century, the Franciscans (with whom he came into the nearest connection) were in their first period, and were animated by their first love; they numbered among them many men who were zealous and active for the good of souls. The Bishop of Lincoln rejoiced to find in them instruments and fellow-workers, full of insight and power. That was why he honoured them with his confidence, availed himself of their services, and extended to them his support.

A century passed away, and Richard of Armagh had experiences of the Order of quite another kind. The Mendicants were caressed by the Bishops and Popes; it fared with them as with children who are the pets of their families—they were spoiled. Distinguished by privileges, they became more and more pretentious and encroaching; the Order and its honour, its interests, and its revenues, became now the chief objects of their aims, instead of the honour of God, the good of the Church, and the salvation of souls. Degeneracy, the moral corruption of both the Mendicant orders, was an accomplished fact. In such circumstances, a man who was an honest lover of goodness, and had a clear eye for the real state of matters, must of course take up quite a different position toward these Orders from a man of the same gifts and of like spirit who had lived a hundred years earlier, when they were in their moral bloom and glory. The difference of spirit, therefore, between the two men is more apparent than real.

But we also cast a look forward from Richard of Armagh to John of Wyclif. It has been conjectured that the latter, in the matter of the Mendicant orders, followed immediately in the footsteps of the former. This conjecture was favourably received, and for a long time has passed as a histori-

cal fact. What led to this was the circumstance that Wiclif, in several of his writings, made repeated and very severe attacks upon these orders. But the writings referred to belong not to the earliest, but precisely to the latest which he produced. In his earlier and earliest pieces I find none of this severe antagonism to the Mendicant monks, but, on the contrary, in many places a sentiment of recognition and high esteem. This will be pointed out more fully hereafter. We have no warrant, therefore, to suppose that Wiclif took up immediately the threads which had dropped from the hands of Richard of Armagh, when, after several years' residence in Avignon, he died there in December 1359. One thing only is certain that Wiclif, in his earnest and persistent warfare against church evils and corruptions—a warfare which he too carried on from love to Christ the Church's Lord, and with the weapons of God's Word—had Richard Fitzralph, in particular, as one of his nearest precursors.

The discourse of the Archbishop of Armagh called forth a reply from a Franciscan doctor of theology in Oxford, Roger Conway,⁸⁷ which appeared at latest in 1362, but probably some years earlier, in the Archbishop's lifetime. This production is a very different one from the Archbishop's, both in form and in spirit, for it is not a spoken discourse, but a treatise of twice the bulk, and the whole gist of the monkish doctor is the exact opposite of the Prelate's. The Franciscan's standpoint is entirely that of the scholastic divine and the Church lawyer. In his mode of treating his subject, the pulsation of personal feeling is scarcely ever perceptible, which makes so pleasing an impression in the Archbishop. He asserts over and over again that the discourse of the Archbishop, whom

he treats, however, with great respect, is nothing but a bill of accusation against the begging orders. What he puts in the forefront himself is the view-point of Law and Right. It is more the "Decretalist," the master of Church law, whom we listen to than the theologian; whereas in Richard Fitzralph the feeling of the devout Christian, of the true pastor, of the zealous Church prince pulsates throughout. But this purely legal posture of the defender of the Mendicants makes the inevitable impression that, however unconsciously, yet in substance and effect it is only the selfish interests of the orders that he undertakes to defend.

Here, too, we think we ought to mention another writing which dates from this century, more precisely from 1356, and which, so far at least, deserves to be put side by side with Richard Fitzralph's discourse, as both pieces are directed against the evils and abuses of the Church. We refer to the much-discussed, but as it seems to us, more discussed than known tract, *Of the Last Age of the Church*, which was long ascribed to Wiclif himself, and given out for a juvenile piece of his, but upon inadequate grounds, and in disregard of weighty reasons which make against the attribution.* The short essay is in substance nothing more than an indictment against the sins of the priests, and particularly against their traffic in offices (simony). This abuse the author considers to be the Third Trouble which comes upon the Church. The first consisted in the Persecutions, the second in the Heresies, the third in Simony. There is now only one more trouble to follow, viz., the Devil at broad noonday—*i.e.*, the Antichrist. This view, and a great deal more in the tract, the author borrows from the

* *Vide Article I. in the Appendix.*

writings of Abbot Joachim of Flore, but he bases it as Bernhard of Clairvaux also does in his sermons on the Song of Songs, (33), upon Ps. 95, vv. 5 and 6.

It is not difficult to discover that the author views the Church disorders of the time in a very narrow manner. He has an eye only for abuses and sins attaching to those of the clergy who are in possession of tithes and landed endowments. This shows that his position in the Church is one different from theirs—a position from which this particular side of the Church's evils falls directly upon his eye; that is to say, he seems to belong to one or other of the Mendicant orders, like the last-named Roger Conway. The author, besides, in his whole style of mind, is a man of narrow views; his mode of thinking is apocalyptic in the meaner not grander sense, and he hangs entirely upon authorities such as Abbot Joachim, or rather the pseudo-Joachim writings. This last circumstance helps us to trace with certainty his connection with the Franciscans, particularly with that portion of the Order which was attached to Joachimism, and specially to the apocalyptic views of the so-called "Eternal Gospel." At all events, this production was entirely destitute of any strong, living germs of principle from which any future development could spring.

SECTION V.—*Thomas of Bradwardine—His Teaching and Spirit.*

VERY different is the case with the teaching of an important contemporary of the foregoing writer, who, like him, belongs to the period immediately preceding Wiclif's public career.

We refer to Thomas of Bradwardine, a Christian thinker, who knew nothing higher and holier than to do battle for

“the cause of God,” and especially to bring into recognition the free and unmerited grace of God as the one only source of salvation, in the face of an age whose strong leaning, on the contrary, was to build its salvation upon human merit.⁸⁸ Nor did he entirely fail in gaining the age’s concurrence in his teaching. His contemporaries held him in high esteem; they gave him the honourable title of the “Profound Doctor” (*Doctor profundus*).⁸⁹ The lectures delivered in Oxford, in which he expounded his doctrine, found such high acceptance that many of his auditors, including men of high position, made repeated requests to him to embody his views in a work for publication. And Wyclif in particular, who could scarcely have known him personally, was full of esteem for him, which he manifests upon every mention of his name, although he strongly opposes some of his dogmatic views. We believe that we are not mistaken in maintaining that the principles which lay at the basis of Bradwardine’s teaching were not without important influence upon Wyclif. In the fifteenth century, also, his credit still stood very high. A man like John Gerson (†1429) often quoted him as an authority in his work on *The Spiritual Life of the Soul*.

At the period of the Reformation he seems to have been little known, but at the beginning of the seventeenth century George Abbot, Archbishop of Canterbury (1610-1633), revived the memory of his celebrated predecessor, and had the merit of suggesting and promoting the publication of his principal work, which was prepared for the press by Henry Savile, Warden of Merton College, upon the basis of a collection of six manuscripts.⁹⁰ But this service to his earlier fame came too late, for Bradwardine and his work

have never obtained, in later times, the high consideration to which they are entitled.⁹¹

Thomas of Bradwardine⁹² was born near the end of the thirteenth century, but where and in what year cannot be determined with certainty.⁹³ He takes notice himself, on one occasion, that his father lived in Chichester.⁹⁴ As, however, it appears, from Oxford documents of the year 1325, that he then held the office of a Proctor of the University, it is concluded, on good grounds, that he must have been born in 1290 at the latest. Further, we have certain knowledge that he went to Oxford as a student, and was there admitted into Merton College, which had been founded in 1274. Here he studied not only scholastic philosophy and theology, but also mathematics and astronomy, with such success as to obtain the highest reputation in all these branches of learning.

It was at this period, also, that an incident occurred to him which gave a decisive turn to his inner life, and which we fortunately learn from his own pen. His narrative is as follows:—"I was at one time, while still a student of philosophy, a vain fool, far from the true knowledge of God, and held captive in opposing error. From time to time I heard theologians treating of the questions of Grace and Free Will, and the party of Pelagius appeared to me to have the best of the argument. For I rarely heard anything said of grace in the lectures of the philosophers, except in an ambiguous sense; but every day I heard them teach that we are the masters of our own free acts, and that it stands in our own power to do either good or evil, to be either virtuous or vicious, and such like. And when I heard now and then in church a passage read from the Apostle which exalted grace and humbled

free-will,—such, *e.g.*, as that word in Romans ix., ‘So then it is not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that showeth mercy,’ and other like places,—I had no liking for such teaching, for towards grace I was still unthankful. I believed also with the Manicheans, that the Apostle, being a man, might possibly err from the path of truth in any point of doctrine. But afterwards, and before I had become a student of theology, the truth before mentioned struck upon me like a beam of grace, and it seemed to me as if I beheld in the distance, under a transparent image of truth, the grace of God as it is prevenient both in time and nature to all good deeds—that is to say, the gracious will of God which precedently wills, that he who merits salvation shall be saved, and precedently works this merit of it in him, God in truth being in all movements the primary Mover. Wherefore, also, I give thanks to him who has freely given me this grace (*‘Qui mihi hanc gratiam gratis dedit’*).⁹⁵

From this interesting testimony from his own lips, it appears that Bradwardine, while still a student, and even before he had begun the regular study of theology, had experienced a spiritual awakening which brought him off from the Pelagian way of thinking, and led him to the conviction that the Grace of God is prevenient to all God-pleasing action, instead of being acquired by such action preceding. This awakening had evidently occurred in connection with such utterances of St. Paul as that in Romans ix. 16, which had suddenly struck upon the young man’s soul with a clear light and arresting force, insomuch that from that day forward the all-determining power of grace became the central truth of his Christian thinking.

It has been already mentioned that Bradwardine held

a University office in 1325. We next hear of him delivering lectures for some time as a Doctor of Theology in the University, by which he laid the foundations of his theological reputation, and at a later date he became Chancellor of St. Paul's in London. When the war with France broke out, and Edward III. made the campaign in person, John Stratford, Archbishop of Canterbury (1333—1348) proposed him to the King for war chaplain and confessor. In this capacity he accompanied the king in his campaigns in 1339 and subsequent years, and so great was his religious and moral influence upon Edward and his army, upon whom he knew how to press the claims of humanity, that many historians of those wars were convinced that the English victories were more due to the holiness of this priest than to the warlike virtues of the King and the valour of his troops.

In 1348 Archbishop Stratford died, and the Chapter of Canterbury chose Bradwardine to be his successor; but the King's attachment to him was such that he could not make up his mind to release him from attendance on his person. But upon the death of John Ufford, who was nominated in his stead in May 1349, before receiving consecration, and the chapter having a second time made choice of Bradwardine, the King at length gave his consent to the arrangement. Thomas of Bradwardine was nominated Archbishop by King and Pope, was consecrated in Avignon in the beginning of July, and returned immediately to England to assume his office. But only a few weeks after, 26th August 1349, he died in the Palace of Lambeth.

Bradwardine's theological views are exhibited in a systematic form in the work already named. It bears

the title *Of the Cause of God*, for the author has the consciousness of appearing like an advocate in defence of God's honour, in standing forward to oppose Pelagianism, and to exalt the agency of God's free and unmerited grace in the conversion and salvation of man. He by no means conceals from himself that in so doing he is swimming against the current of prevailing opinion, for it is his own remark that "the doctrine is held by many either that the free will of man is of itself sufficient for the obtaining of salvation; or if they confess the need of grace, that still grace may be merited by the power of the free will, so that grace no longer appears to be something undeserved by men, but something meritoriously acquired. Almost the whole world," he says, "has run after Pelagius and fallen into error." But Bradwardine does not allow himself to be disheartened by this state of things. He knows for certain that one man, if the Lord is with him, will be able to chase a thousand foes, yea to put twelve thousand to flight. (1 Sam. xviii. 7).

This joyful courage in conflict, this devout confidence of victory in pleading the cause of God's grace as the alone source of salvation, cannot fail to remind us of the Reformers, who were essentially heralds of the same grace, and opposers of the delusion that salvation can be earned by human merit. The method, it is true, which the scholastic divine followed was different from theirs, owing to the peculiar character of mediæval culture. The Reformers went to work theologically, Bradwardine philosophically. He gives as his reason for adopting this method, that the later Pelagians had asserted that Pelagius had been overcome purely by

church authority and by theological proofs, but in a philosophical and rational way it had never been possible to confute him. Bradwardine's design, therefore, is to make use mainly of philosophical arguments and authorities. In regard to authorities he adheres, in fact, so closely to his declared design, that he gives more space to the sayings of philosophers, old and new, and attaches more stress to them, than he does to his own independent reasonings. However, he also elucidates the question theologically, namely by arguments of Scripture and appeals to the Fathers and Scholastics, with the view, as he says himself, of showing the right sense of many passages of Holy Scripture and the Fathers, which had often been misunderstood and perverted by the Pelagians of ancient and later times.

Waiving, for want of space, any analysis of the doctrinal contents and reasonings of a work so bulky and profound, it may be observed, in general terms, that the scientific success of the performance is less satisfactory than the religious and moral spirit with which it is imbued. For the *absolute determinism* which Bradwardine sets forth, labours under an inappropriate mixing up of metaphysical and physical ideas with an ethical question, and thus rests the doctrine that salvation is grounded exclusively upon grace upon an insecure foundation.

But the spirit which animates him is worthy of all recognition. He is filled with a moral pathos—a lofty earnestness of Christian piety, which cannot fail to make the deepest impression.¹¹³ His drift is to exhibit grace as a free and unmerited gift of God, and to strike down every imagination of human merit in the work of conversion. It is for this reason that he controverts in

particular the favourite dogma of the Scholastics that man can qualify himself to receive grace, in other words, that he can *deserve* grace, if not to the strict extent of full worthiness (*de condigno*), still in the sense of meetness and suitableness (*de congruo*). To acquire merit before God, Bradwardine holds to be impossible for man in any sense whatsoever.¹¹⁴ He who affirms the contrary turns God, in effect, into a poor trafficker; for he who receives grace on the footing of any kind of merit, has purchased the grace and not received it as a free gift.

Bradwardine sets out, in fact, as pointed out above, from his own experience—from actual life—and he keeps actual experience ever in his eye. And in regard to the authorities for the doctrine of unmerited grace to whom he cares most to appeal, he is thoroughly alive to the fact that it was by their own living experience that they too were brought to the knowledge of that grace. The apostle Paul, for example, was “a chosen vessel of grace,” inasmuch as, at a time when he was not thinking of good works at all, nor was even standing aloof from deeds of wickedness; at a time when he was thirsting for Christian blood, and was even persecuting the Lord himself, suddenly a light from heaven shone round about him, and the grace of Jesus Christ at the same instant preventingly laid hold upon him. He speaks of the Apostle as emphatically a child of grace, who, in gratitude for the same, makes devout and honourable mention of this grace—his mother—in almost all his epistles, vindicating her claims, particularly in his Epistle to the Romans, where he makes grace the subject of a large and acute investigation¹¹⁵ which fills the epistle almost from beginning to end. And quite in a

similar spirit he remarks upon Augustine that, "like the Apostle, he was at first an unbeliever, a blasphemer, and an enemy of the grace of Jesus Christ, but after the same grace had converted him with like suddenness, he became, after the apostle's example, an extoller, a magnificent and mighty champion of grace."¹¹⁶ And like the Apostle Paul, like Augustine the great church-father of the west, Thomas Bradwardine too became, by the light from heaven which shone upon him in his youth, an extoller and champion of the grace of God, in opposition to the Pelagian and self-righteous spirit which prevailed in his time.

It was by no means his intention, indeed, in so doing, to place himself in antagonism to the Church of Rome. On the contrary, he declares expressly his steadfast belief in the doctrinal authority of the Church. He submits his writings to her judgment; it is for her to determine what is orthodox in the questions which he has investigated; he wishes with all his heart to have her support where he does battle with the enemies of God; where he errs, to have her correction; where he is in the right, to have her confirmation.¹¹⁷ But still, in the last resort, he consoles himself with the help of God, who forsakes no one who is a defender of His cause.¹¹⁸

SECTION VI.—*The Vision of Piers Plowman.*

WHILE the learned Doctor was defending God's cause with the weapons of science, and seeking to bring back his age from the paths of Pelagian error into the one only way of salvation, the same cry for grace was also heard from the

conscience of the common people, in their feeling of the urgent need of a better state of things.

About twelve years after Bradwardine's death, this feeling of society found expression in a great popular poem, which yet remains to be noticed by us as a speaking sign of the times. We refer to *The Vision of Piers Plowman*, which reveals to us, not so much by the social position of its author, as by the circle of readers for whom he wrote and the spirit of which the work is full, the deep ferment which at that time was spreading through the lowest and broadest stratum of the English people. The author himself undoubtedly belonged to the educated class, or rather to the learned class, which was then almost identical with it. He is familiar with the whole learning of his time; he knows the Classics and the Fathers, the Scholastics and the Chroniclers, and also the Canon Law; he quotes the Bible according to the Vulgate and the "Glossa;" quotes likewise Latin Church hymns in the original; in short, he was a scholar, and probably a monk. In the sixteenth century the tradition existed that his name was Robert Longland or Langland, born at Cleobury Mortimer, in Shropshire, educated in Oxford, and then admitted a monk in the Benedictine Priory of Great Malvern, Worcestershire.

Several allusions to localities, such as the Malvern Hills and the like, point to the fact that he must have lived in the west of England, on the borders of Wales. Perhaps he sprang from the agricultural population; at all events, he shared their feelings, and wrote for them and from their point of view; and this he did to such good purpose, that his poetry went straight to the people's hearts, and continued to be loved by them and committed to memory, and

frequently imitated, for several generations, down to the middle of the fifteenth century.

From the first appearance of this poem, the figure of Piers Plowman became, and long continued to be, a favourite one with the friends of moral and religious reform. The great popularity of the work is attested by the very considerable number of manuscripts of it which still exist, most of them written towards the end of the fifteenth century.¹¹⁹ Add to this the circumstance that these manuscripts are seldom written in a beautiful hand, and are scarcely ever adorned with illuminated initials, which is a pretty plain proof that they were not intended for the higher ranks of society, but for the middle class. A highly remarkable document of the time of the Peasants' War, under Richard II., viz., the "Call" of the ringleader, John Ball, to the people of Essex, contains several manifest reminiscences of Piers Plowman.¹²⁰ The poet himself, however, was as little a sower of sedition as he was a heretic. He preaches constantly the duty of obedience to the higher powers. But the pleasure he takes in lowering the great in the estimation of the people, and in raising the credit of the lower classes, could not fail to make him a great favourite with the multitude. And although he did not attack a single doctrine of the Church, yet his unsparing exposure of the sins of the clergy must have aided the growing public sentiment in favour of reform.

In view of the oppression which prevailed among the nobility, the corruption among the clergy, and the dishonesty among the tradesmen, the simple heart of the peasant appears to the poet to be the only remaining seat of integrity and virtue. It is the husbandman in his mean position, not the Pope and his proud hierarchy, who exhibits

upon earth an image of the humble Redeemer. In its language and poetical form, too, the work has quite a popular cast. With the exception of the Latin citations, and some Norman-French phrases which occasionally occur, the language is pure Middle-English; while in form it is the most beautiful example extant of old Anglo-Saxon verse. For it is not rhyme, properly so called, which is here used, but what is called alliterative rhyme. Instead of the Anglo-Saxon alliteration, the Normans, since the twelfth century, had introduced the *romaunce* rhyme, which continued in prevailing use till the middle of the thirteenth century. Later, we find in use a combination of rhyme and alliterative in one and the same line. Still, it is not improbable that during the whole of that time the pure Saxon alliterative continued to maintain itself along with the Anglo-Saxon tongue among the lower strata of the population. Its coming up again to the surface, about the middle of the fourteenth century, appears to be only one aspect of the great social and national movement before referred to which took place at that period. Seen from this point of view, in the literary history of the country, Langland's poem has a special claim upon our attention.

The old Saxon alliterative verse was now so much again in favour that it was used in long romances like *William and the Werewolf*, a position which it continued to hold as late as the fifteenth century, at which date it found imitators even in Scotland. The author of *Piers Plowman* is well acquainted indeed, it is true, with common rhyme, and he introduces it occasionally, but only in Latin of the ecclesiastical type. But in his own English composition he employs exclusively alliterative rhyme; his constant usage being the following, that in every connected couplet of lines

(each line having two rising and two falling accents), the two most important words of the first line begin with the same letter, while in the second line the first accented word also begins with it.¹²²

The poem belongs to the allegorical class, and consists of a long series of visions, in which the poet has revelations made to him in the way of dreams, of the condition of human society, and of various truths relating to it. The date of the composition admits of being fixed pretty exactly. That dreadful plague, which, under the name of the Black Death, laid waste the half of Europe in 1348 and following years, was already several years past. Mention is made more than once of the “Pestilence;” it forms, so to speak, the dark back-ground from which the figures stand out. But a second “sickness” is also referred to which raged in England in 1360-62, and with this agrees the circumstance that the lines, beginning with number 1735, contain an undoubted allusion to the peace of Bretigny, which was concluded in the year 1360, and formed an important incident in the history of the English and French war. Further, the poet touches in vv. 2499 f. upon a great storm from the south-west, which occurred on a “Saturday evening,” to which he alludes also in vv. 4453 f. We know from chronicles that this tempest, which threw down towers and high houses, and almost all the great trees, took place on 15th January 1362,¹²³ and the exactness with which the date of that event is fixed by the poet warrants us in assuming that the poem must have been written no long time thereafter, perhaps at the end of 1362.¹²⁴

The poet goes forth, in the warm summer time, to wander into the wide world. On a May morning, already fatigued by his walk, he lays himself down on the Malvern Hills

beside a well, and falls asleep. There, in a dream, he sees wonderful things—upon a hill in the east a tower, built with great art, the tower of truth; in the west the fortress of care, where dwells the wicked fiend. Upon a charming plain between the two he sees a multitude of men of all ranks and conditions, rich and poor, going about their different works and ways. Clergy, too, are not wanting, begging friars, preachers of indulgences, priests in the service of the King or the nobles, and so forth. With this begins the first of the poet's visions, of which the work, closely examined, is found to contain ten, although this number does not at once meet the eye; for the usual division of the text into twenty *passus* taken from the manuscript copies is rather a superficial one. The visions have a tolerable amount of connection with each other, though by no means a very close one.

A variety of allegorical figures step upon the scene; some talking, some acting, and occasionally a sort of drama develops itself. First appears an honourable lady—the Church—and instructs the poet in the significance of the spectacle before him, and especially on the point that truth is the truest of all treasures, and that the chief subject of truth is nothing else but love and beneficence. Then enters in dazzlingly rich array the lady "Reward," i.e., earthly reward. To her all ranks and conditions of men do homage. She is on the point of being betrothed to "Falsehood," instead of to "Truth." Then "Theology" puts forward his claim to her hand, and all parties repair to Westminster to bring the matter to a judicial decision; but "Truth" hurries on before to the king's palace, and speaks in the ear of the Knight "Conscience." The knight speaks with the king, and the king gives command to put

“Reward” in prison as soon as she arrives. But in prison she fares by no means amiss. The judges in Westminster gain the palace for her cause, a begging friar visits her, hears her confession, and gives her absolution. At last the King sends for her to his presence, gives her a reprimand, and sets her at liberty upon her promises of amendment; he even proposes to wed her to his knight “Conscience,” but the knight, while thanking him in the most courtly terms, draws a picture of her character in the blackest colours. She defends herself in a way to win for her the king’s grace, whereupon “Conscience” appeals to “Reason,” and in the end the king takes “Conscience” and “Reason” to be his councillors.

The poet awakes, but soon falls asleep again, and now begins the second vision. He sees again the same plain full of people, to whom “Reason” is preaching a sermon, in which he tells every rank and condition of people his mind. The sinners before him are seized with remorse. They fall upon their knees, and “Penitence” gives them absolution. And now thousands rise to their feet and set out on a pilgrimage to “Truth.” But nobody knows the way. At last a ploughman calls out that he knows the way. It is here that Piers Plowman comes upon the scene. He offers to show the pilgrims the road in person if they will only wait till he has ploughed and sown a bit of ground, and in the meantime several help him at his work. When it comes, however, to the ears of “Truth” that Piers purposed to make a pilgrimage to her, she sends him a letter of indulgence, desiring him to stay at home and work, and informing him that the indulgence is applicable to all who assist him in his work, a message which awakens among all the greatest joy. But, in the end, nothing more is found

in the brief of indulgence than these two lines, "And those who have done good shall go into everlasting life, but those who have done evil, into everlasting fire" (Matt. xxv. 46). Then the poet awakes again; he reflects upon his dream, and he is convinced that "Do Good" will be better in the last judgment than a whole pocketful of indulgences, or letters of fraternity.

From the third to the tenth vision the representation principally turns upon the three allegorical persons, "Do Good," "Do Better," and "Do Best." The allegorical action passes over more and more into didactic poetry, "the Plowman" coming repeatedly upon the scene, but in such a way that under the transparent veil of that figure the Redeemer Himself is here and there to be recognised.

The whole drift of the poem is to recommend practical Christianity. The kernel of its moral teaching is the pure Christian love of our neighbour — love especially to the poor and lowly; a love of our neighbour reaching its highest point in patient forbearance, and love towards enemies—a love inspired by the voluntary passion of Christ for us. As the "Luxenburgers" (a false coin then circulating widely in England) resemble a "sterling" in the stamp, but are of base metal, so many nowadays bear the stamp of the heavenly King and His crown, but the metal—the soul—is alloyed with sin. The poet accordingly lays bare, on the one hand, the evil works and ways of all ranks and conditions of men, dealing castigation round among all classes with the lash of his satire; while, on the other hand, he commends the good wherever he finds it. That he is by no means a heretic has already been remarked. He assumes without question the whole body of Church doctrine; the doctrine of transubstantiation, *e.g.*, he takes for granted as something

self-evident ; and however much value he attaches to the conscience and the natural understanding of man, he is by no means a despiser of learning, and especially of theology. But what he demands is, that the seven liberal arts and every science should be cultivated in no selfish spirit, in order to acquire wealth ; nor from a motive of vanity, in order to be styled “ Magister ; ” otherwise men only lose their time in them ; but from love to our Lord and to the people. In other words, learning has value in his eyes only when benefit accrues from it to mankind ; and therefore he thinks it a practice to be censured, when mendicant-friars and masters of arts preach to the people about matters above human comprehension, instead of speaking to them of the Ten Commandments and the seven sins. Such men only wish to show off their high learning, and to make a boast of it ; they do not act from sincere love to their neighbour.

On the other hand, he commends all princes and nobles, bishops and lawyers, who in their dignified places are useful to others, and render real service to the world. But “ Truth ” gives her “ brief and seal,” not only to men of learning and rank, but also to men of trade and traffic, to assure them that they shall not come short of salvation, if with all their diligence in trade and money-making, they give out of their gains for the building of bridges, the feeding of the poor, to help in sending children to school, or teaching them a trade, or in setting out poor young women in marriage, and in promoting the cause of religion. Industrious and honest married people are also highly commended ; it is they who hold the world together, for from marriage spring both kings and knights, emperors and servants, father-confessors, holy virgins and martyrs. Evidently Piers the Plowman is made the chief figure of the poem, not merely on account of

his humble condition in life, but also to do honour in his person to labour, joined with the fear of God. Both points of view are inseparably connected in the poem. Undoubtedly there is something of a democratic spirit in the teaching of the author, but it is a Christian democracy, like that word of the Redeemer, "To the poor the Gospel is preached." More than once it is remarked by the poet, how much better off in that respect people in low condition are than the high-placed and the educated. The seven sins are far more dangerous for the rich than for the poor. Augustin himself (the most enlightened doctor and the greatest of the four, Ambrose, Augustin, Jerom, and Gregory the Great), is appealed to as a witness for this, for the poet has read in one of his sermons the passage, "Behold the ignorant themselves take the kingdom of heaven by violence."

That none come into the kingdom of God sooner than the poor and lowly is a thought which he dwells upon in several parts of the poem. For the Church the poet cherishes deep veneration, but this by no means prevents him from speaking openly of her faults. In one place, he makes the general remark, that while uprightness and holiness spring from the Church by the instrumentality of men of pure character and life, who are the teachers of God's law, all sorts of evil, on the other hand, spring from her, when priests and pastors are not what they ought to be. What he has chiefly to censure in the priesthood of his time is their worldliness, their sins of selfishness and of simony. Other shortcomings and failings, indeed, are also mentioned, as when the ignorance of many priests is satirized by the introduction of a curate who knows nothing of the cardinal virtues, and never heard of any cardinals but those of the Pope's making, or when indolence owns frankly that he has been priest and

parson for more than thirty winters, but can neither sing by notes nor read the lives of the saints. He can hunt horses better than tell his parishioners the meaning of a clause in *Beatus Vir*, or *Beati Omnes* in the Psalter.

But it is the worldliness of the clergy that the satirist chiefly lashes. His complaint of the abuse that foreign priests should have so much office and power in England, reminds us vividly of Grossetête's demands, as well as of the measures which King and Parliament, twenty years before, had adopted against Papal provisions and reservations. Hardest and bitterest of all are his complaints of the self-seeking and avarice which prevail in the Church.

"Conscience" complains before the king's tribunal of the Lady Reward, on this as well as other grounds, that she has infected the Pope with her poison, and made evil the holy Church. She is in the confidence of the Pontiff, for she and Master Simony seal his bulls; she consecrates bishops, be they ever so ignorant; and she takes care for the priests to let them have liberty to keep their mistresses as long as they live. Time was when men lived in self-denial and privation, but nowadays men value the yellow gold piece more than the cross of Christ, which conquered death and sin. When Constantine endowed the Church with lands and lordships, an angel was heard to cry aloud in Rome, This day the Church of God has drunk venom, and the heirs of St. Peter's power "are a-poysoned all."

"If possessions be poison,
And imperfect them make,
Good were to discharge them
For holy Church sake,
And purge them of poison
E'er more peril befall."

The suggestions of this passage take the form in another

place of a prophecy—the prophecy of a coming king, who will punish with heavy blows all monks and nuns and canons who have broken their rules, and, in league with his nobles, will reform them by force.

“And yet shall come a king
And confess you all
And beat you, as the Bible telleth,
For breaking of your rule,
And amend you monks and monials,
And put you to your penance,
Ad pristinum statum ire.
And barons and their bairns,
Blame you and reprove.”

If it is the “monks possessioners,” or landed orders, who are here meant, neither are the Mendicant orders spared in other places, as, *e.g.*, in the passage where a begging friar visits the all-fascinating Lady “Reward” in person, and gives her absolution in return for a horse-load of wheat, when she begs him to be equally obliging to noble lords and ladies of her acquaintance who love to wanton in their pleasures. “And then,” says she, “will I restore your church for you, and build you a cloister-walk, and whiten your walls, and put you in painted windows, and pay for all the work out of my own purse; so that all men shall say I am a sister of your house.”

It is thus that the Visions of Piers the Plowman attack, not indeed the doctrine of the Church of that age, but in the most outspoken manner, all the prevailing sins of the clergy from the highest to the lowest, and in so doing, render distinguished service in helping forward the work of reform.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I.

NOTES TO SECTION I.

1. Thomas Wright, *Biographia Britannica literaria*. Anglo-Saxon Period. London, 1842, p. 384 f.
2. Compare C. Friedrich Koch, *Historische Grammatik der Englischen Sprache*. Vol. 1, p. 8. Max Müller's *Lectures on the Science of Language*, p. 349.
3. Ranke, *Englische Geschichte vornehmlich in xvi. and xvii. Jahrhundert*. Vol. I., p. 16.
4. Compare the carefully accurate representation given in Reuter, *Geschichte Alexander's III., und der Kirche Seiner Zeit III.*, p. 188; also pp. 713-724, "Zur Kirchengeschichte England's in den Jahren, 1171-4."
5. Constantine Hoefer has the merit of having been the first to call attention to what he has called the Papal State System in his "*Anna von Luxemburg*," p. 6; and in "*The Avignon Popes*." Vienna, 1871, p. 7 f.
6. The complaint against King John, made by the barons, "quod suo tempore ancillavit regnum quod invenit liberum," is given by Abbot William in his *Chronicle of the Monastery of St. Andrew in d'Achery's Spicilegium*, Vol. II., p. 853.
7. Rymer, *Foedera*. Vol. I., Part 1, p. 138.
8. So the Church was called even thus early—e.g., in *Magna Charta* itself—Rymer, 1, 132. Comp. Pauli *Geschichte von England*, vol. III., pp. 898, 909.
9. Matthew of Paris, *Historia Major*—in truth, Roger of Wendover's *Flores Historiarum* in Matthew of Paris. London, 1686, p. 313 f. Comp. Roberti Grosseteste *Epistolæ*. Luard. Lond. 1861, p. 22.

NOTES TO SECTION II.

10. What follows is a revision of my "*Programm*," Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln. Leipzig, 1867, 4to.
11. *Opus tertium*. Ed., Brewer, 1869, pp. 31, 91.
12. Of Grossetete's numerous works nothing more than : few pieces have as yet been published. At the beginning of the sixteenth century his Commentaries on the works of Aristotle, and on the Mystical Theology of the Pseudo Dionysius were printed, the latter in Strasburg in 1502; but these subjects have very little interest for the present age. In the seventeenth century one of his successors in the See of Lincoln, John Williams (1612-1641), who died Archbishop of York in 1649,

conceived the design of publishing his collected works in 3 folios, and he had already made collections and preparations with that view; but the outbreak of the civil war prevented the execution of the design. Towards the end of the same century, Edward Brown published in his appendix to the *Fasciculus Rerum Expetendarum*, etc., several pieces of Grossetête, especially several of his sermons, theological thoughts, and a portion of his correspondence. This correspondence has recently been edited more critically and in a complete form by Luard of Cambridge, in the collection of "Rerum Britannicarum Medii aevi Scriptores," published at the cost of the English Government, under the title "*Roberti Grossteste, episcopi quondam Lincolniensis Epistolæ*. London, 1862." This valuable correspondence is the most trustworthy source for learning the development of the man and his character. Repeated attempts have been made to furnish a Biography of Grossteste, but several of these never got beyond the stage of the collection of materials. So it befell Bishop Barlow of Lincoln, Samuel Knight, Anthony Wood, and Edward Brown. It was not till the end of last century that a biography of the venerable man was prepared and sent to the press—Samuel Pegge's "Life of Grossteste." Lond., 1793. But the book was an ill-starred one; most of the copies are said to have perished in a fire which broke out in the printing office. The fact is certain, that the book is a very rare one even in England, and that there is hardly a single copy of it to be found in all the libraries of Germany. Luard, in his preface, has thrown some fresh light upon the life of Grossteste.

13. In Luard's *Roberti Grossteste's Epistolæ*. Preface, p. xxxii.

14. Grossetête alludes to this question having been put by him in a letter to the Cardinal-Legate Otho, written in 1239,—Ep. 74 of Luard's Coll., p. 242; and I know of no incident in his life with which I can more suitably connect it than with that given in the text.

15. *Epistolæ*, p. 43 f.

16. *Epistolæ* 40, p. 132; 41, p. 134; 50, p. 146; 88, p. 275.

17. Dugdale, *Monasticum Anglicanum*. New ed. by Caley, Ellis, and Bandinel, 1830 fol., v. 6, p. 1266, with plan and 4 views of the Cathedral.

18. *Epistolæ* 22, p. 72 f.

19. *Epistolæ* 73, p. 235 f.

20. *Epistolæ* 55, p. 170.

21. *Epistolæ* 93, p. 290 f.

22. *Epistolæ* 4, p. 32.

23. *Epistolæ* 74, p. 241 f.

24. *Epistolæ* 50, p. 146. "The Sermones ad Clerum," published by Edward Brown in 1690, were no doubt made use of by the Bishop in his visitations in addressing the clergy of the different rural deaneries.

25. *Epistolæ* 23, p. 90. Comp. his Letter to King Henry III. No. 124, p. 348.

26. Comp. Brown's *Appendix ad Fasciculum*, p. 322.

27. *Epistolæ* 24, p. 95 f.

28. *Epistolæ* 13, p. 57 f. Comp. 51, p. 147 f.

29. *E. g. Sermo ad Clerum*, in Brown. *Monitio et persuasio pastorum*, on the text, "I am the Good Shepherd," p. 260 f.
30. *Eistolæ 17*, p. 63 f. Comp. 11, p. 50 f., where his feeling of responsibility for the salvation of the souls committed to his episcopal charge is strikingly expressed.
31. *Eistolæ 26*, p. 102. Ep. 19 and 71, pp. 68 and 204.
32. *Eistolæ 74*, p. 241 f. With special earnestness he appeals in this matter to the conscience of a certain Hugo of Pateshull (Ep. 25, p. 97 f.), who died in 1241, Bishop of Lichfield.
33. *Eistolæ 46*, p. 130 f.
34. *Eistolæ 27 and 28*, pp. 105 f. and 108 f., and still more fully in Ep. 72, p. 205, 13.
35. Comp. Pauli's *Programm* on Grossstete and Adam of Marsh. Tübingen, 1864.
36. Epp. 40 and 41, pp. 131 f. ? 133 f.—the former addressed to the General of the Dominicans, the latter to the Franciscan General, both pretty much in the same terms.
37. *Eistolæ 34*, p. 121.
38. *Eistolæ 107*, p. 317.
39. *Eistolæ 58*, p. 180.
40. In the "Circulars" to the Archdeacons above referred to. Ep. 107, p. 317.
41. *Sermo Roberti*, etc., in Brown. Appendix, pp. 250, 257. The state of the text of which, however, leaves much to be desired.
42. An allusion to the Greek Church.
43. We confine ourselves to the simplest outlines of the course of thought. The way in which he gives expression to his thoughts, while making use of the most powerful rebukes of the inspired prophets, is sometimes such as must have made the hearers tremble.
44. Here he comes to speak of the evil state of matters which was the occasion of his undertaking the journey to Lyons.
45. *Non obstantibus privilegiis*, etc.—the clause so often made use of when the Pope of the day evaded, or rather set aside, *ad hoc*, the ordinances of his predecessors or even his own, still in legal force, in favour of a special case, or in behalf of some favoured individual.
46. The Papal Brief has been printed in full by Brown in his Appendix, p. 399, and in Luard, p. 432 f., note.
47. This is indeed the view commonly taken. Even Luard in his Preface, p. lxxix. f., and Pauli in his *Programm* on Grossetête, and Adam von Marsh, p. 24, assume that the letter was addressed to the Pope. The superscription, also, which Luard has given to the letter, no doubt on MS. authority, indicates that the letter was addressed to the Pope himself. Nevertheless, this superscription is in my judgment erroneous and unguenuine. For in the first place the style, *discretio vestra*, is quite unsuitable to the Pope. Grossetête himself makes use of

sanctitas vestra in the two Epp. 110 and 117, pp. 328 and 338, which were certainly addressed to the Pope—a circumstance which was not unnoticed by Brown. But next, the fact is a decisive one that toward the end of the letter, the address, *reverendi domini* occurs, which undeniably presupposes a plurality of persons addressed. Besides, the tone of the letter, on the supposition that it was addressed to the Pope, would have been quite unaccountable. The fact is not ignored by Luard, that the style of this letter differs greatly from that of the two which were, without doubt, intended for the Pope, Preface lxxix. f. But what he brings forward to account for this difference is not quite satisfactory, if we suppose that this letter, too, was addressed to the Pope. Still, however, Brown is right in maintaining that the letter was intended for the eye of the Pope, whether it came to his hands directly or indirectly. Undoubtedly so, and for this reason, it required no little courage and good conscience to write to both the Pope's commissaries in such a strain; whereas we should be compelled to think far otherwise of the tact and good taste of the writer if it were certain that he had meant his words directly for the eye of the Pope himself. The mistake, however, is explained in some measure by the circumstance, that the Pope's agent, Innocent, bore the same name as the Pope himself.

49. This celebrated letter is to be found in Brown, p. 400 f.; in Oudin's *Commentaria de Scriptoribus Eccles. Antiquae*, vol. III., p. 142 f.; and in Luard, Ep. 128, pp. 432 f. Luard tells us that it occurs times without number in the MSS. Among those who have referred to it, I have to name Wiclif himself. He was not only well acquainted with its contents, but he has also in one place reproduced it almost entire—I mean in his still unprinted work, *De Civili Dominio*, lib. I., c. 43, MS. 1341, of the Imperial Library of Vienna, side by side with the Pope's two letters. And Wiclif not only incorporated the letter with his own work, but also added to it a kind of commentary in the way of justifying its contents, in which he states precisely its principal thoughts, and adopts them as his own, Huss also knew the Bishop's Epistle, and cited it in part in his work, *De Ecclesia*, c. 18, *Opera*, 1558, v. I., p. 235 f. As to the state of its text, it is by no means free from errors in the Wiclif MS. just named, but still in some places this MS. supplies readings materially superior to those of Brown and Luard. May I add in this place one more remark in conclusion. Luard has observed, p. xli, that it is not known when or by whom the collection of Grossetête's letters was made. Now, as the MSS. used by Luard, which comprise the whole collection or the greater part of it, are of no higher age than the fifteenth century, and as only single letters were found in copies dating from the fourteenth century, I do not think it superfluous to mention that I find in Wiclif, who more than once gives accurate citations from other letters of Grossetête besides the one mentioned above, exactly the same ordering or numbering of the letters which Brown gives, and which is retained also by Luard. As now those writings of Wiclif, which contain accurate quotations from the letters of Grossetête, belong to the year 1370-78, the fact becomes certain that even as early as that date the collection existed the same in extent and order as we now know it. And as Wiclif quotes the letters by their numbers, and assumes this order to be already known, we may very well infer that the collection is at least fifty years older, and may even be carried back in date to the thirteenth century.

50. Matth. Paris, *Hist. Maj. Angliae*. Edit., W. Wats, p. 872.
51. The letter of Edward I. to Clement V., of 6th May 1307, is to be found in Rymer, *Foedera II.*, p. 1016, and in Wood, *Hist. Univ. Oxon.*, Vol. I., p. 105.
52. Wood, *Hist. et Antiquit. Univ. Oxon.*, Vol. I., p. 105, from a MS. of Gascoigne. The Oxford Declaration does not belong to the year 1354, as Luard seems to suppose, p. lxxxiv., but was first made in 1307, in connection with the proposal for the canonisation of the Bishop. Wood introduced this subject under the year 1254, merely because Grossetête's death had occurred immediately before.
53. Especially in the passage quoted above from *De Civili Dominio*, Wiclif calls the Bishop of Lincoln a Saint, *ex istis . . . istius sancti . . . primo sequitur*.
54. In the same passage in Wood, Vol. I., p. 106, which has already been used immediately above.
55. Printed in Walch, *Monimenta mediæ aëvi*, Vol. I., Fasc. 2, p. 181 f. Comp. especially pp. 190, 192.
56. Precor, O pater alme, Roberte, etc. The whole is printed, with few omissions, in Henry Wharton's *Anglia Sacra*. Lond., 1691. Vol. II., pp. 325-341.
57. Comp. Hase, *Handbuch der Protestantischen Polemik*. First Edit., p. 315.
58. *Epistolæ*, 123, p. 346 f.
59. *Hac sola ad portum salutis dirigitur Petri navicula*. Ep. 115, p. 336. The *hac sola* answers completely to the Reformation principle—*verbo solo*—which constitutes the *formal* principle of Protestantism.
60. *Epistolæ* p. 85, 269.

NOTES TO SECTION III.

61. His work in five books, *De Legibus et Consuetudinibus Angliæ*, written in the years 1256-59, ranks among jurists, not only as the earliest, but also as the foremost scientific treatment of English law in the middle age. Comp. Karl Jüterbock's *Henricus de Bracton und sein Verhältniss zum Römischen Recht*. Berlin, 1862, p. 40 f.
- 61a. Pauli, *Geschichte von England*, vol. III., pp. 713-724.
62. Rymer, *Foedera*, vol. I., p. 907 f. Dated Anagni, 27th June 1299.
63. Rymer, *Foedera*, I., p. 928 f.
64. John Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*. Lond., 1870. Vol. II., 689 f.
65. The Brief is printed in Walsingham's *Historia Anglicana*. Ed., Riley, 1863, I., 259 f.
66. The King's reply also in Walsingham, I., 255.
67. A Statute of Provisors of Benefices in Ruffhead, the *Statutes*, 1786, 4to, pp. 260-64.
68. The word *præmunire* (instead of *praemonere*) does not stand in the text of the law itself, but used to be employed in the writ of the sheriffs appointed by the

law to issue ; vide Barrington's Observations on the more Ancient Statutes. London, 1796, 4to, p. 279.

69. In Walsingham, as cited above, p. 258.

70. A letter, numbered 113, in Vol. xxiv., p. 1208, of the Bibliothe. Maxima, P.P., from Peter de Blois, Archdeacon of Bath, to the Archbishop of York, calling upon him to arrest the progress of the enemies of the Church by Councils and severe penalties, might seem to prove a different state of matters, if the description of the heretics referred to were a little more exact. These are manifestly described as *Cathari*, but as to their doings and proceedings nothing definite whatever is stated. It is possible that the reference may be to imported Catharism, of which mention is to be made immediately.

71. Chronicle of the Augustinian Canon, William of Newbury, in Yorkshire, †1208. Historia Rerum Anglicarum Willelmi Parvi, ad fidem codd. MSS., rec. Lond. 1856. 8vo., Vol. I., 120 f.

72. Henry of Knighton, Canon of Leicester, in the second half of the fourteenth century, Chronica de eventibus Angliae, in Twysden's Historiae Anglicae Scriptores. Lond., 1652. T. III. Col. 2418.

73. Petri de Pilichdorf contra sectam Waldensium tractatus in Bibliothe. Maxima Patrum, Lyon 1677, xxv., especially c. 15, p. 281. Here the author's drift is to show to the Waldenses a number of "peoples and races and tongues," where, by God's grace, all are orthodox in the faith, and have remained utterly untouched by this sect, *ubi omnes homines sunt immunes a tua secta penitus conservati*; and among these he mentions England first of all, then Flanders, etc.

74. Flathe, Geschichte der Vorläufer der Reformation. II. p. 159 f., 184, 196.

75. The poem is printed in the collection, "Political poems and songs relating to English History," ed. Thomas Wright, Vol. I., pp. 231-249, under the title added by the editor, *Against the Lollards*. The date assigned to it, 1381, I cannot for weighty reasons regard as correct. In the seventh strophe, says the author,

O terra jam pestifera,
dudum eras puerpera
omnis sanæ scientiæ,
haeresis labe libera,
omni errore extera,
exsors omnis fallaciæ.

76. I make use here intentionally of the words of Döllinger, Kirche und Kirchen, Papsthum und Kirchenstaat. München, 1861, xxx. f.

NOTES TO SECTION IV.

77. When King Leo IV. of Lesser Armenia applied to Pope Benedict XII. for assistance against the Saracens, the latter replied, in 1341, that before he could do anything for this object, the Armenians must renounce their many errors. A schedule of these errors was appended to the Brief, extending to the number of 117. From that time attention was directed in the west of Europe to the differences in

doctrine and usage of the Armenian Church. Hence the subject and title of Richard's work, *De Erroribus Armenorum*.

78. Vid. Dr. Karl Werner's Geschichte der Apologetik und Polemisch. Literatur der Christl. Theologie. Schaffhausen, 1864. III., 409 f. Comp. Hefele's Conciliengeschichte, IV., p. 569 f., p. 425 f.

79. Joh. Bale, *Scriptorum Britannicorum Centuriæ*, p. 246.

80. Trialogus, IV., c. 36. Ed. Lechler, p. 575.

81. Defensorium curatorum contra eos qui privilegiatos se dicunt, printed in Goldast's *Monarchia*, II., pp. 1392-1410, with a better text in Brown's Appendix ad Fasciculum rerum expetend, etc., V. II., pp. 466-486. This speech, however, is said to have been printed in Lyons as early as 1496, and in Paris in 1511, along with a tract in reply to it, to be mentioned further on; vid. d'Argentré *Collectio judiciorum de novis erroribus*, 1-379.

82. Schwab, Joh. Gerson, p. 459 f.

83. *Unde non video, qualiter ista opinio de obsecrantia mendicitatis spontaneae fuerit introducta, nisi ignorando scripturam, aut fingendo eam esse Christi ritæ conformem, ut per ipsam quæstus amplior haberetur*; vid. Brown, p. 486.

85. Brown's *Fasciculus*, etc., p. 466.

85A. Ibid., p. 468.

86. Of course, the Mendicant orders themselves, as a deeply interested party, could not be expected to give an impartial judgment on the proceedings of the archbishop. We learn from the History of the Franciscans, by Lucas Wadding, how they sought to explain such an opposition on his part. The archbishop, it was alleged, had set his heart upon getting for his own palace an ornament belonging to a neighbouring convent of the Order, and when this was refused him, and the magistrates of Armagh had taken the monks and their rights under their protection, the Archbishop conceived a malicious feeling against them, and now did all he could to increase the opposition which had already begun to be stirred up against the Order in England.—*Annales Minorum*, IV., p. 62.

87. His name is written Connovius or Chonoe. The piece is entitled *Defensio Religionis Mendicantium*, and is printed in Goldast's *Monarchia*, pp. 1410-1444.

NOTES TO SECTION V.

88. In what follows, I present a revision of my Essay, *De Thoma Bradwardino Commentatio*. Lipsiæ, 1862-4.

89. It seems to me very probable that this epithet may have been suggested to his admirers by his frequent use of the word *profound*, e.g., *profundissima haec abyssus*. *De Causa Dei*, p. 808.

90. Thomæ Bradwardini Archiepiscopi olim Cantuariensis *De Causa Dei*, et de Virtute Causarum Libri tres. Lond., 1618, fol. Edited by Henry Savile, Head of the same College in Oxford (Merton) where Bradwardine had once been a student and fellow.

91. In Germany, Schroeckh, it is true, in his "Kirchengeschichte," gave a pretty long extract from the "Causa Dei," v. 34, pp. 226-240. But from his time down to the present day, if I am not quite mistaken, all our most learned Church historians have bestowed little attention upon the work, or as good as none at all. Neander, at least, in his General History of the Christian Religion and Church, has passed over Bradwardine in profound silence; while Gieseler, though he gives several important passages from him (*Lehrbuch der Kirchengeschichte*, 3 Edit., II., p. 239), has entirely misconceived the fundamental principle of his teaching; as Baur also does, in his "Christliche Dogmengeschichte," p. 265, 2 Edit.

92. The most reliable account of his life is contained in Savile's Preface to the "Causa Dei."

93. The small village in the county of Hereford, not far from the borders of Wales, from which Thomas took his second name, is still called Bradwardine.

94. *De Causa Dei*, III., c. 22.

95. *Ingrata mihi gratia displicebat*. The word-play here cannot be imitated in English.

96. *De Causa Dei*, Lib. I., c. 35, p. 308.—*Postea vero adhuc nondum Theologiæ factus auditor; prædicto arguento velut quodam gratiæ radio visitatus, sub quadam tenui veritatis imagine videbar mihi videre a longe (i. e., e longinquso) gratiam Dei omnia bona merita præcedentem tempore et natura, scilicet gratam Dei voluntatem, qui prius utroque modo vult merentem salvari et prius naturaliter operatur meritum ejus in eo, quam ipse, sicut est in omnibus motibus primus Motor; unde et ei gratias refero qui mihi hanc gratiam gratis dedit.*

97. In proof of this, I point to the fervent prayer with which Bradwardine towards the close of the whole work, begins Cap. 50 of Book III., p. 808. He invokes the Redeemer thus:—"Good Master,—Thou my only Master,—my Master and Lord, Thou who from my youth up, when I gave myself to this work by Thy impulse, hast taught me up to this day all that I have ever learned of the truth, and all that, as Thy pen, I have ever written of it,—send down upon me, also now, of Thy great goodness, Thy light, so that Thou who hast led me into the profoundest of depths, mayst also lead up to the mountain-height of this inaccessible truth. Thou who hast brought me into this great and wide sea, bring me also into the haven. Thou who hast conducted me into this wide and pathless desert, Thou my Guide, and Way, and End, lead me also unto the end. Show me, I pray Thee, Thou most learned of all teachers, show to Thy little child, who knows no outlet from the difficulty, how to solve the knot of Thy Word so hardly knit. . . . But now I thank Thee, serenest Lord, that to him who asketh, Thou hast given; to him that seeketh, Thou hast shown the way; and to him that knocketh, Thou hast opened the door of piety, the door of clearness, the door of truth. For now when Thou liftest the light of Thy countenance upon Thy servant, I believe I see the right understanding of Thy word," etc. In one place, after he had been warmly defending Augustin against a misinterpretation of Peter Lombard, and had subjected the scholastic to a somewhat sharp critique, maintaining that the latter interpretation is in direct opposition to the meaning of that Father (Lib. II., c. 10, p. 502), he is almost alarmed at his own boldness, and

pleads in excuse for himself "the zeal for the house of God and catholic truth, which fills him with a vehement ardour against the error of the Pelagians; for it is not against Lombard himself that he has said a word, but against his error, because it is so nearly akin to the false teaching of Pelagius."

98. *De Causa Dei*, I., c. 38, p. 319. Compare c. 39, p. 347.
99. *Ibid.* I., c. 43, p. 392, f.
100. *Ibid.* I., c. 35, p. 311.—*Factus est gratiae laudator, gratiae magnificus ac strenuus propugnator.*
101. *Ibid.* Bradwardine's Preface, p. 7 f. Also the end of the work, III., c. 53, p. 872 f.
102. *Ibid.* p. 8.

NOTES TO SECTION VI.

103. In the British Museum there are eight of these MSS., from ten to twelve in the different libraries of Cambridge, and as many in those of Oxford, etc.
104. In Walsingham's *Historia Anglicana*, under the year 1381. Ed., Riley, II., p. 33 f.
105. Comp. Introduction of Pickering to his edition of *Pierce Plowman*. London, 1856, I., xxviii. f.
122. *E.g.* Vs. 1901 f. The command of God to Saul in his war with the Amalekites, to put every man, woman, and child to death, as well as the cattle, is expressed thus :—

"Burnes and bestes,
bren hem to deth,
widwes and wyves,
women and children."

123. Walsingham, *Historia Anglicana*. Ed., Riley, I., 296.
124. Our citations are from the newest edition of the poem, 1856, by Thomas Wright, 2 vols. 8vo., London. This is properly a second edition, following upon that which was prepared by Pickering. The Introduction, from which we have derived several of the facts mentioned above, was drawn up by Pickering, after whose death Thomas Wright, the well-known historian of literature, took charge of the new edition. As early as the sixteenth century two different editions of the Vision appeared—the first, published in 1550, was edited by Crowley, and went through three editions in a single year. Crowley belonged to that estimable class of publishers who in the sixteenth century united in themselves the character of the scholar and author with that of printer and bookseller, and who deserved so well of literature. The other edition, which appeared in 1561, was also published in London by a famous printer, Owen Roger. In 1813 Whitaker published an edition of the book, upon the authority of a MS. which exhibits a peculiar recension of the text.
125. Passus xv., v. 10, 607; 10, 659. The poet proceeds upon the mediæval tradition of the Donation of Constantine. Comp. Döllinger, the *Pope-Fables* of

the Middle Age. Munich, 1863, p. 61. Like the poet of our "Visions," Dante, in the "Inferno," canto xix., v. 115, curses that Donation as the source of all the avarice and simony in the Church—

"Ahi Costantin, di quanto mal fa matre
Non la tua conversion, ma quella dote,
Che de te pere il primo ricco patre!"

The legend in particular of the angel's voice, "Hodie effusum venenum in ecclesia," is found in the scholastic divines, chroniclers, and poets of the thirteenth century. See Döllinger, as above.

ADDITIONAL NOTES TO CHAPTER I., BY THE TRANSLATOR.

(1.) RICHARD FITZRALPH, Archbishop of Armagh—

There are two well authenticated facts in the earlier life of this remarkable prelate left unmentioned by Professor Lechler, which it is desirable to bring into view. The first of these is his early connection with Balliol College, of which he was for some time a Fellow. This fact is distinctly stated in the following passage of Anthony Wood's History and Antiquities of the Colleges and Halls in the University of Oxford. Having stated the chief provisions of the original statutes of the college—those of the Lady Devorguilla—he goes on to say, that "the said statutes were for divers years kept inviolable, yet not so much but that divers of the said scholars, about forty years after, having raised some doubts from them, would not content themselves to study the liberal arts—only such that were performed in the schools of arts by artists according to the aptest sense of the statutes, but also would ascend to higher faculties, though prohibited so to do by the then extrinsic masters or procurators named Robert de Leycester, D.D., a Minorite, and Nicolas de Tingwyke, Doctor of Physic and Bachelor of Divinity. At length, the matter being controverted among them a considerable time, was in 1325 referred, with the procurators' consent, to two doctors and two masters that were formerly fellows of this house, Drs. Richard de Kamsale and Walter de Hockstow, who then, after both parties were heard, decided this matter in the Common Hall thus : That no Fellow of this house, whether Master or Scholar, learn any Faculty, or give his mind to it, either in full term or vacation, besides the liberal arts that by artists are read and practised in the School of Arts." The college incident here referred to occurred only about ten years before the coming of Wiclif to Oxford and his probable admission to Balliol, and will be found in the sequel to have a bearing upon the course of study through which Wiclif passed as a member of the University of Oxford. (*Vide* Additional Note to Cap. III.—Wiclif's connection with Balliol College.) As Fitzralph was undoubtedly a man of enlightened views, which were considerably in advance of his age, his connection with Balliol in the first quarter of the fourteenth century, taken along with Wiclif's in its second quarter, may serve to suggest that Balliol, then one of the youngest of the colleges of the University, was also one of the most free and liberal in its ideas ; and probably, too, the remarkable impatience of divers of its scholars of

being limited to the studies usually included in arts, and their eager desire to read in "the higher faculties," may be taken to indicate, in these young men, a more than ordinary amount of intellectual life and ardour. The archives of Balliol contain a brief Latin record of the conclusion arrived at by the four referees to whose decision the question was submitted, and a full transcript of this record is given in the recent report of Mr. Riley on the Balliol Papers to the Royal Commission on Historical MSS. This interesting document will be found below in the Additional Notes to Chap. II., note 5. The other fact in the career of Archbishop Fitzralph remaining to be mentioned is that he, as well as Bradwardine, was for some time private chaplain to the famous Richard de Bury, bishop of Durham, who was consecrated 19th December 1333, and died 14th April 1345. This bishop was the greatest book-lover and collector of his time, and wrote a work on his favourite subject, entitled "*Philobiblos*." His library was one of the choicest in England; and passed, after his death, to Durham College, in Oxford. His name comes into connection with some matters of Balliol College during his episcopate, as will appear in the sequel, these matters having an interesting bearing upon the early academic life of Wiclif. (*Vide* Additional Note to Cap. III.) His high appreciation of two such men as Fitzralph and Bradwardine may perhaps be taken as an indication of his own spirit and bearing on the great Church-questions of the time. For the fact of their connection with him as his chaplains, see Introduction to *Registrum Palatinum Dunelmense*, edited by Sir Thomas Duffus Hardy, Deputy Keeper of the Public Records.

(2.) "THE VISION OF PIERS PLOWMAN."

Professor Lechler's numerous quotations from Langland's Poem, only a few of which we have thought it necessary to reproduce for English readers, are all taken from the text of the two editions brought out by Thomas Wright in 1842 and 1856. But it may be useful to mention here, for the benefit of English readers who would like to look farther into this really great moral and religious allegory of the age of Wiclif, that in 1867, 1869, and 1873, three editions of the poem, representing the three distinct forms which its text assumed successively under the author's own hand, were brought out by Rev. W. W. Skeat, in connection with the early English Text Society. This work of Mr. Skeat is characterised by Professor Henry Morley, in his "Library of English Literature," as singularly thorough. He publishes, with a special introduction, each of its three forms separately, as obtained from a collation of MSS., with various readings and references to the MSS. containing each form. A fourth section is assigned to the General Introduction, Notes, and Index. Besides this work on the whole Poem, Mr. Skeat has contributed to the Clarendon Press Series the first seven Passus of "The Vision of William concerning Piers the Plowman, by William Langland, according to the version revised and enlarged by the author about A.D. 1377, with Introduction, Notes, and Glossary," as an aid to the right study of early English in colleges and schools, and also as a guide to the reading of the whole Poem by those to whom its English, without such help, would be obscure." Mr. Skeat's thorough study of the Poem from all points of view makes him our chief authority in any question concerning it.

Professor Morley himself has given a long and lucid analysis of the whole Poem, extending to twenty-five pages double-columned in the second department of his

"Library of English Literature" (Cassell's), devoted to the literature of religion; and his high appreciation, both of the Poem and the Poet, may be gathered from the closing paragraph of his extremely painstaking account :—"So ends the vision, with no victory attained, a world at war, and a renewed cry for the grace of God; a new yearning to find Christ, and bring with Him the day when wrongs and hatred are no more. The fourteenth century yielded no more fervent expression of the purest Christian labour to bring man to God. Langland lays fast hold of all the words of Christ, and reads them into a Divine law of love and duty. The ideal of a Christian life shines through his poem, while it paints with homely force the evils against which it is directed. On points of theology he never disputes, but an ill life for him is an ill life, whether in Pope or peasant. He is a Church Reformer in the truest sense, seeking to strengthen the hands of the clergy by amendment of the lives and characters of those who are untrue to their holy calling."

It is gratifying to meet with so hearty a sympathy with aims so evangelical and holy as those of "Piers Ploughman," in a literary critic of our time of such mark as Professor Morley. Nor can we deny ourselves and our readers the pleasure of bringing up again into view, side-by-side with the appreciations of a German scholar and divine who has so much sympathy with Wiclif and all his English precursors as our learned author, the noble words in which the illustrious historian of Latin Christianity has put on record his estimate of the author of Piers Plowman's vision :—"The extraordinary manifestation of the religion, of the language, of the social and political notions, of the English character, of the condition of the passions and feelings of moral and provincial England, commences, and with Chaucer and Wiclif completes the revelation of this transition period, the reign of Edward III. Throughout its institutions, language, religious sentiment, Teutonism is now holding its first initiating struggle with Latin Christianity. In Chaucer is heard a voice from the court, from the castle, from the city, from universal England. In Wiclif is heard a voice from the University, from the seat of theology and scholastic philosophy, from the centre and stronghold of the hierarchy—a voice of revolt and defiance, taken up and echoed in the pulpit throughout the land against the sacerdotal domination. In the Vision of Piers Plowman is heard a voice from the wild Malvern hills, the voice, it should seem, of an humble parson, a secular priest. He has passed some years in London, but his home, his heart, is among the poor rural population of central mercantile England. . . . The visionary is no disciple, no precursor of Wiclif in his broader religious views. The Loller of Piers Plowman is no Lollard—he applies the name as a term of reproach for a lazy, indolent vagrant. The poet is no dreamy speculative theologian—he acquiesces, seemingly with unquestioning faith, in the Creed and in the usages of the Church. It is in his intense, absorbing, moral feeling that he is beyond his age. With him outward observances are but hollow shows, mockeries, hypocrisies, without the inward power of religion. It is not so much in his keen, cutting satire on all matters of the Church, as his solemn installation of Reason and Conscience as the guides of the self-directed soul, that he is breaking the yoke of sacerdotal domination. In his constant appeal to the plainest, simplest, scriptural truths, as in themselves the whole of religion, he is a stern Reformer. The sad, serious satirist, in his contemplation of the world around him, the wealth of the world and the woe, sees no hope but in a new order of things, in which, if the hierarchy shall

subsist, it shall subsist in a form, with power, in a spirit totally opposite to that which now rules mankind. . . . The poet who could address such opinions, though wrapt up in prudent allegory, to the popular ear, to the ear of the peasantry of England ; the people who could listen with delight to such strains, were far advanced towards a revolt from Latin Christianity. Truth, true religion was not to be found with, it was not known by Pope, Cardinals, Bishops, Clergy, Monks, Friars. It was to be sought by man himself, by the individual man, by the poorest man, under the sole guidance of Reason, Conscience, and the Grace of God vouchsafed directly, not through any intermediate human being or even sacrament, to the self-directing soul. If it yet respected all existing doctrines, it respected them not as resting on traditional or sacerdotal authority. There is a manifest appeal throughout, an unconscious installation of Scripture alone, as the ultimate judge. The test of everything is a moral and purely religious one—its agreement with holiness and charity.”—(*Dean Milman's History of Latin Christianity*, xvi., p. 536. Ed. 1855.)

CHAPTER II.

WICLIF'S YOUTH AND STUDENT LIFE.

SECTION I.—*Birth-place and Family.*

WE are always more accurately informed of Wiclit's birth-place than of the date of his birth, and we owe this information to a learned man of the sixteenth century, John Leland, who has been called the father of English antiquarians.¹

In his *Itinerary* he has inserted a notice of Wiclit's birth-place, which, though only obtained from hearsay, yet as the earliest, and recorded only about 150 years after the great man's death, must always be regarded as of high authority. Leland's remark runs as follows:—"It is reported that John Wiclit, the heretic, was born at Spresswell, a small village a good mile off from Richmond."²

This notice, it is true, has its difficulties. The first is, that Leland himself appears to contradict his present statement in another of his works, for he says in his *Collections* in mentioning "Wyclif" in the county of York, that "Wyclif" the heretic sprang from that place.³ These two statements appear, at first sight, to contradict each other, and yet, when looked at more narrowly, they are easily reconciled; for in the first-named work Leland is speaking of Wiclit's birth-place proper; while, in the other, he is rather making mention of the seat of his family. But there is a more considerable difficulty in the circumstance, that in the neighbourhood of the town of Richmond, in the North Riding of Yorkshire, no village of the name of Spresswell has ever, by the most

/ reliable accounts, been known to exist. This fact has given rise to various conjectures, *e.g.*, that Leland, in the course of his inquiries, had heard of a place called Hipswell or Ipswell, and had mistaken its name for Spresswell, or that Spresswell may have been the name of some manor-house or estate of the Wiclis. It was also thought by some that Leland could not have personally travelled through that district of the county; for, in giving its topography, he has fallen into many mistakes.⁴

But very recently Leland's credit for accuracy on this point has been redeemed, and his account has received a confirmation which sets the subject itself in the clearest light. The same scholar, Dr. Robert Vaughan, who, since 1828, has rendered important services to the history of Wiclis, has, by means of correspondence with other scholars in the north of England, established the following facts:—

Not far from the River Tees, which forms the boundary between the North Riding of Yorkshire and the county of Durham, there was formerly a town of the name of Richmond, of higher antiquity than the existing Richmond, and which is to be found in old topographical maps under the name of Old Richmond.

About an English mile off from Old Richmond, there was still in existence in the eighteenth century, close to the Tees, a small village or hamlet called Spresswell or Spesswell. An old chapel also stood there, in which were married the grandparents of an individual living in that neighbourhood, who vouched for the truth of this information. These were, however, the last pair married in the chapel, for it fell down soon after, and now the plough passes over the spot where it stood.⁵

Only half a mile from Spresswell lies the small parish

of Wycliffe,⁶ the church of which still stands on the level bank of the Tees, without tower, and in part grown over with ivy. Upon a high bank, not far from the little church, is a manor-house, which formerly belonged to the family of Wycliffe of Wycliffe. From the time of William the Conqueror down to the beginning of the seventeenth century, this family were lords of the manor and patrons of the parish church. In 1606 the estate passed, by marriage of the heiress, to the family of Tunstall. Another branch of the family, however, carried on the name, and only about sixty-four years ago the last representative of the family, Francis Wycliffe, died at Barnard Castle, on Tees. The tradition both of the locality and the Wycliffes of Wycliffe has always been, that it was from this family that the celebrated forerunner of the Reformation sprang.

It no longer, then, admits of a doubt that Wiclit was born at Spresswell, not far from Old Richmond. His birth-place belongs to the district which, though not a county itself, but only part of one, is commonly called Richmondshire, forming the north-western portion of the great county of York, or, more exactly, the western district of the North Riding, a hilly, rocky highland, with valleys and slopes of the greatest fertility. The valley of Tees in particular, and especially that part of it where Spresswell was situated, is described as a region of great and various beauty, and presenting landscape scenery of equal grandeur and softness.⁸

It was a country of strongly marked character upon which the eyes of Wiclit rested in his childhood and boyish years; but we should lose ourselves in the domain of poetry if we endeavoured to paint the kind of influence which was rained upon Wiclit's development by the characteristic

features of the region in which he was born and grew up. We have a surer foothold for the history of the man in the peculiar character of the population of those northern counties of England. In Yorkshire especially, though also in other counties of the north, as Northumberland, Westmoreland, and Cumberland, the Anglo-Saxon element maintained itself with greater purity, tenacity, and force, than in the south of England. In the centuries next succeeding the Norman invasion, much more of the old English nature continued to keep its hold in those parts of the kingdom than in the midland and southern counties.⁹ It is said that there are still families there at the present day, who have remained in uninterrupted possession of their estates from the time of the Norman invasion, and almost even from the period of the Saxon immigration; these old Saxon families, it is added, belonging not to the higher but the lower nobility, those who are called “the gentry,” in distinction from the nobility. The country people at the present day, in the whole of Yorkshire, and most of all in the remote dales of the interior, still speak an ancient dialect, which, like the Scottish tongue, bears an unmistakeable German impress. The whole nature of the Yorkshire people has an antique cast about it. In the rest of England, the Yorkshireman passes for a robust, stout-hearted, and honest man—who is every inch a man.

It was from the bosom of this tenacious old Saxon people that Wiclif sprang; and the more it holds true that it was precisely the German element of the English population which formed the strength of the national movement of the fourteenth century, the more full of importance, unquestionably, is the circumstance that a man like Wiclif, who rendered, in particular, such important services to the

development of the English language, should have belonged to a province and people who had always been distinguished by faithful and persistent adherence to old Saxon nature and ways. And it appears that the family of Wiclit belonged precisely to those families of the lower nobility in Yorkshire who have persistently preserved for centuries, not only their estates, but also the characteristics of their Saxon descent.

The family of the Wiclis must at one time have been numerous, and of many branches; for documents of the second half of the fourteenth century give information of different men of this name.¹⁰ In 1368 we find mention of Robert of Wycliffe, as priest of a chapel in Cleveland, in the diocese of York, probably the same priest who, in 1362, was made parish priest of Wycliffe, and in 1363 made an exchange of this office for another. Besides him, we know, from church documents, of another priest of the same period, who bore the same name as our Reformer, written "John Wycclyve," who, on 21st July 1361, was appointed parish priest of Mayfield by Archbishop Islip, that being an estate of the See of Canterbury. He remained priest there for nearly twenty years, and in 1380 was made rector of the parish of Horsted Keynes, where he died in 1383, one year before his more illustrious namesake. We shall have occasion, below, to return to this second John Wycclyve.¹¹

It is, moreover, a remarkable fact, that the family of the Wiclis, after the death of their most celebrated member, and in particular from the Reformation down to their extinction, was always distinguished for special fidelity to the Church of Rome. In 1423, a certain Robert Wyclif, parish priest of Rudby, in the diocese of York, made

will which leaves no room for doubt that the testator was very far from sharing the views of John Wiclid. At the commencement of the document he commends his soul to "Almighty God, to Saint Mary, and to all Saints;" he passes over the Redeemer in entire silence; he makes more than one provision for masses for the repose of souls; and he leaves several legacies in favour of nuns and Mendicant monks, etc. From the circumstance that such soul masses are to be said, not only for himself, but also for the souls of his father, mother, and all his benefactors, it is plain that the parents of the testator must also have been strict Romanists. Among the four churches, for the repair of each of which he left forty shillings, is named the church of "Wyclif," and to the poor of the same parish is also left a sum of forty shillings. These two latter dispositions are unquestionable indications that the testator was connected by birth with that locality.¹²

It looks as if Wiclid's family, feeling themselves exposed to danger by his keen assault upon the Church of Rome, had become all the more devoted to the Papacy on that account. At all events, even after the English Reformation, the Wiclifs remained Roman Catholic, and along with them about a half of the inhabitants of the village—a division which still continues at the present day. The old church on the bank of the Tees belongs to the Anglican Establishment, while the Roman Catholic inhabitants of Wycliffe repair to a chapel built at the side of the manor house on the neighbouring height.

Touching the date of Wiclid's birth,¹³ no direct documentary information has come down to us. John Lewis was the first who fixed upon the year 1324; and he has been followed in this date by the great majority of

writers without further inquiry, although he never makes even an attempt to produce documentary evidence in support of it. But it may be conjectured that he proceeded upon the fact that when Wiclif died at the end of 1384, he may have been a man of sixty, and counting back from that year, he arrived at 1324 as the approximate year of his birth.¹⁴ But we have no voucher for the fact that Wiclif at his death was exactly sixty years of age. Younger than that he could hardly have been, but he might easily have been older. We know that during the last two years of his life he suffered from the effects of a paralytic attack, as he afterwards died from a repetition of the shock. If we assume that 1324 was his birth-year, he must have had a stroke at fifty-eight, a comparatively early age; whereas all the notices which we have of his latest life are far from leaving the impression that his vigour had been broken at an unusually early period. This circumstance taken alone makes it probable, that when Wiclif died he had reached a more advanced age than is usually supposed, and was, at least, well on towards seventy. Add to this, that some expressions in his writings, where he speaks of his earlier years, when taken without bias, naturally produce the impression that the man who could so express himself must have been pretty well advanced in life. Thus, he says in one of his Saints' Day sermons,—“When I was still young, and addicted myself to a great variety of favourite pursuits, I made extensive collections from manuals on optics, on the properties of light,” etc. That does not sound as if we should take the speaker for a man of only fifty-four or fifty-six years, but rather for a man considerably older; and as those sermons, by sure marks, could not

have been delivered later than 1380, and not earlier than 1378, Wiclit could not have been more than from fifty-four to fifty-six years of age, if the common date of his birth is correct. All these indications make it appear probable, in our view, that when Wiclit died he must have been considerably older than is usually supposed. He must, in that case, have been born at least several years earlier than 1324; but we have no positive data for fixing with precision that earlier date.

SECTION II.—*Wiclit's Course of Study.*

WE have as little historical information on the subject of Wiclit's earliest education as on that of his birth-year; and it would answer no good purpose to fill up this blank with the suggestions of our own fancy. But so much is implied in the nature of the case, that in the years of his childhood and early youth, he grew up vigorously into the old Saxon pith of the family stem to which he belonged, and of the whole people among whom he was brought up. No doubt, also, the historical recollections and folk-traditions which lived among the population of Yorkshire, especially in their connection with certain localities, had very early made a deep impression on the susceptible soul of the boy, and become all his own. For I find the writings of Wiclit so full of allusions and reminiscences of the early times of his fatherland, as to justify the assumption that from his youth up he had been familiar with patriotic scenes and pictures. The boy, no doubt, received the first elements of instruction at the hand of some member of the clergy. Probably the parish priest of Wycliffe was his first teacher, and taught him the

rudiments of Latin grammar; and doubtless, too, the youth, who must from childhood have had a lively and inquisitive genius, spent his whole time at home till he removed to Oxford. For as yet there were no schools in existence to prepare youth for the universities, except the cloister and cathedral schools. The universities themselves had rather the character of Latin schools and gymnasia than universities proper; at least a multitude, not only of growing young men, but even of mere boys, were to be found in Oxford and Cambridge, and that not as the pupils of schools collateral to the university, but as proper members of the university itself. We know, *e.g.*, from the loud complaints of Richard Fitzralph, archbishop of Armagh, that many young people under fourteen years of age were already considered to be members of the university. The importance of the universities in the middle ages was a great deal more comprehensive than in modern times. While the universities of the present day, at least on the Continent, are essentially of use only to young men above eighteen in acquiring for several years the higher education,—whereas grown-up men ordinarily belong to the academic body only as teachers or officials, and in comparatively small numbers,—the mediæval universities included in their structure an additional storey, so to speak, both above and below—an upper storey, what we might call an academy in the narrow sense—and a lower storey, a species of grammar school and gymnasium. As to the former, the number of grown-up men who belonged to the mediæval universities, not exclusively as teachers of the student youth, but in the general character of men of learning, and as full members of the self-governing corporation (*Magistri Regentes*) was very large and important. The English uni-

versities are now the only ones in Europe which have preserved this feature to a great degree unimpaired, in the fellows of colleges, whose numbers are considerable. On the other hand, in the lower storey, the mediæval universities included a multitude of young people who were not as yet out of boyhood, and who for the present could only enjoy the benefit of a preparatory learned training. This latter circumstance must especially be kept in view, when we meet occasionally with statistical notices of the attendance at universities like Oxford, which astonish us by their enormous figures.

In view of this last fact, it would be in itself quite conceivable that Wiclf might have gone to Oxford even as a boy. But it is not probable, notwithstanding. For his home, close on the northern boundary of Yorkshire, was so far distant from the University that the journey, in the fourteenth century, must have been an affair of no inconsiderable time and fatigue and even danger. Prudent and conscientious parents would hardly be able to bring themselves to the resolution of sending a son upon such a journey before his fourteenth or sixteenth year; indeed, to let him pass away for ever (for this was necessarily involved in it) from their parental oversight.¹⁷ It is more probable that Wiclf was already a youth at least from fourteen to sixteen years old when he went to Oxford. Positive testimonies as to the exact date are wholly wanting, but assuming that he was born in 1320, and that he did not repair to the University before his fifteenth year, we would be brought to 1335 as the approximate year.

At that time, of the twenty colleges and more which exist to-day in Oxford, there were five already founded, viz., Merton, founded in 1274; Balliol, 1260-82; Exeter,

1314; Oriel, 1324; and University College, 1332. These foundations were originally designed purely for the support of poor scholars, who lived under the oversight of a President, according to a domestic order fixed by the Statutes of the Founders. It was only at a later period that they became, in addition to this, boarding-houses for students in good circumstances. Queen's College was not erected before 1340: It took its name from the circumstance that Philippa, Queen of Edward III., contributed towards its foundation. The proper founder, however, was Sir Robert Eggesfield one of her court chaplains. It has been commonly accepted as a fact that when Wiclif went to Oxford he was immediately entered at Queen's College. This he could only have done on the supposition that he did not come up to the University till the year 1340. But we have already shown that an earlier date for that incident is more probable. Apart from this chronological consideration, there is a want of all sure grounds for the assumption that Wiclif entered into any connection with Queen's College at so early a date. The oldest records of the College go no farther back than the year 1347; and the name of Wiclif does not occur in them earlier than 1363; and even then he appears not properly as a member of the College, but only as a renter of some chambers in its buildings;¹⁸ a relation to it which appears to have continued for nearly twenty years—down to the time when Wiclif's connection with the University as a corporation entirely ceased.

If the question thus recurs, into what college Wiclif was received when he first came to Oxford, we must fairly confess it is one to which, in the absence of all documentary evidence we are unable to supply any distinct or confident

answer. We know that in the course of years he became a member, and sometimes head of several colleges or halls. Merton and Balliol, in particular, are named in this connection, to say nothing at present of a third hall of which we shall have to speak hereafter. But all the notices we have of this kind relate to a later period—not to Wiclif as a young scholar, but to his mature years. If mere conjectures might be allowed, nothing would appear to us more probable than that he must have been entered at Balliol on his first coming to the University. For this college owed its foundation (1260–82) to the noble family of Balliol of Barnard Castle, on the left bank of the Tees, not more than five miles from Spresswell, Wiclif's birth-place; and that there existed a connection of some kind between the Wiclif family and Balliol College, appears from the circumstance that two men, who were presented to the parish of Wycliffe, by John Wycliffe of Wycliffe, as patron, in 1361 and 1369, were members of Balliol College—the one William Wycliffe, a fellow, and the other John Hugate, then Master of the college.¹⁹

But here we must confess we are only hinting at a possibility which, however, will be raised to a probability in an investigation which we shall have to enter into at a subsequent stage.

But if the college into which Wiclif entered as a scholar, does not admit of being determined with certainty, there is none the less certainty, on the other hand, in regard to the “nation” in the University, to which from the first he belonged. It is well known that all the universities of the middle ages divided themselves into “nations,” according to the countries and provinces, sometimes even the races, to which their members belonged. Thus, in the University of Paris, from a very early period, there were four nations—

the French, the English (at a later period called German), the Picard, and the Norman. The University of Prague had, in like manner, from its foundation, four nations—the Bohemian, Bavarian, Polish, and Saxon. In the University of Leipzig, the division with which it started at its foundation in 1409 as a colony from the University of Prague, into the Meissnian, Saxon, Bavarian, and Polish nations, continued down to the year 1830;²⁰ and even at the present day this ancient arrangement continues to be of practical moment in many respects, in relation, *e.g.*, to particular endowments. It was the same with the English Universities in the middle ages, but in Oxford there were only two such "nations," the northern and the southern (*Boreales* and *Australes*). The first included the Scots, the second the Irish and Welsh. Each nation, as in the universities of the Continent, had its own self-chosen president and representative, with the title of Procurator (hence *Proctor*).

That Wiclf must have joined himself to the northern "nation," might of course be presumed; but there is express testimony to the fact that he was a *Borealis*.²¹ And this is not without importance, inasmuch as this "nation" in Oxford, during the fourteenth century, was the chief representative, not only of the Saxon or pure Germanic folk-character, but also of the principle of the national autonomy. But this connection of Wiclf with the "northern nation" had a double effect. It had, first of all, a determinative influence upon Wiclf's own spirit and mental development; and on the other hand, as soon as Wiclf had taken up an independent position, and began to work upon other minds, he found within the University, in this nation of the *Boreales*, no inconsiderable number of men of kindred

blood and spirit to his own, to form the kernel of a self-inclusive circle—of a party.

And now, as respects the studies of Wiclf in the years of his scholar-life, the sources here also fail of giving us as full information as we could have wished. We are especially left in the dark as to the men who were his teachers. It would have been of great importance to know whether he was personally a hearer of Thomas Bradwardine and of Richard Fitzralph. The latter point is quite possible, so far as date is concerned, as Richard was, in 1340 and following years, still resident in Oxford as Chancellor of the University, and was still, without doubt, delivering theological lectures; for it was not till 1347 that he was made Archbishop of Armagh. On the other hand, it seems very doubtful whether, at the time when Wiclf was a student, Thomas Bradwardine was still in Oxford, and was not rather already in France, in the train of Edward III., as a military chaplain. Wiclf, indeed, more than once makes mention in his writings of the *doctor profundus*, but he does this in a way which decidedly leads us to infer only a knowledge and use of his writings, not a personal acquaintance with himself.

But if we are left in the dark on the subject of Wiclf's principal teachers, we are not altogether without light on the question as to what he studied and how. The knowledge which we possess at the present day of the character of the mediæval universities and of the scholastic philosophy is sufficient of itself to give us some insight into these points. For one thing, it is beyond all doubt, that the more the middle ages made exclusive use of the Latin tongue (not, it is true, in its classical form) as their exclusive scientific organ, they were all the less familiar with the Greek language and literature. It may, with full warrant, be

maintained, that the scholastic philosophers and divines were, as a rule, ignorant of Greek, and attained to any knowledge they had of what was contained in the Christian and classical literature of the Greek tongue, only by means of Latin translations; and, in part, only by the medium of Latin tradition. Men like Roger Bacon, who had some acquaintance with Greek, are rare exceptions to that rule.²² It was only in the course of the fifteenth century, that, as a consequence of certain well-known events, the study of the Greek language and literature was diffused. But even at the beginning of the sixteenth century, Greek scholars and teachers like Erasmus and Philip Melancthon were rare enough. Manifestly the re-rising of the sun of Hellenic speech and culture on the horizon of western Europe, was one of the chief causes of the advent of the modern epoch; as on the other hand, the prevailing ignorance of the Greek language and of any direct acquaintance with Greek literature, was one of the most essential *momenta* which conditioned the one-sidedness and narrowness of mediæval science.

This want, in point of fact, we recognise also in Wiclif. His writings supply manifold proofs of his total ignorance of Greek. This is shown, not only by very frequent mistakes in the writing of Greek proper names and other words, the blame of which, it might well be thought, lay at the door of the copyists, not of the author himself, but also by the etymological explanations of Greek terms which Wiclif not seldom introduces, which for the most part are beside the mark, and erroneous.²³ He is always more successful when on questions which pre-suppose a knowledge of Greek, he leans on the authority of others, as, e.g., on Jerome, as *linguarum peritissimus*, *De Civili Dominio* iii., c. 11. When Wiclif quotes a Greek writer, it is his custom, quite frankly,

to give, at the same time, the name of the Latin source from which he drew his knowledge of the Greek work. In short, it is quite plain that in all cases he looked at the Greeks only through Latin spectacles. But this defect was, no doubt, entirely owing to the education which Wiclif had received in his youth, especially as a scholar in Oxford. If there had been any possibility at that time of acquiring a knowledge of Greek in the University, Wiclif was just the man who would certainly not have neglected the opportunity of acquiring it. For how ardently he thirsted after truth, and with what unwearied industry he sought to obtain a many sided culture for his mind, we shall immediately have occasion to convince ourselves.

Another point is, the course of study which was pursued in the middle ages. This differed from the course of modern university training, as the latter has developed itself on the Continent, in one very important respect: that much greater stress was laid upon, and in consequence, much more time was devoted to general scientific culture; whereas, in the present day, professional studies have the preference, and certainly more so than is wise and good. For at that time a large space was occupied by the study of the "Liberal Arts." And these seven *artes liberales*, from which the Faculty of Arts took its name, behoved to be completed in a strict order and course: first, the *Trivium*, including grammar, dialectics, and rhetoric; then the *Quadrivium*, embracing arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music. The *Trivium* was also named compendiously the *Artes Sermocinales* or Logic, and not without reason, inasmuch as *λόγος* designates equally speech and thought; those who were engaged in this stadium of study were called *Logici*. To the *Quadrivium*, on the other hand, was given sometimes

the collective name of "Physics," in the comprehensive ancient sense of science of nature, and sometimes the name of the Mathematical Arts.²⁴

That Wiclif possessed a special faculty and taste for natural philosophy we shall immediately point out; but first let us dwell a little longer upon his logical studies. We know from the communications of the talented John of Salisbury, who died in 1180, that in the twelfth century many who devoted themselves to the sciences never got beyond the *Trivium*, and especially dialectics;²⁵ and this is all the more conceivable the more it was usual in the scholastic age to look upon dialectic as the science of sciences, and even, in a certain degree, as the philosophy of all science (*Wissenschaftslehre*). In the logic and dialectic of the middle ages, the formal schooling and discipline of scientific thought joined itself partly to a kind of philosophy of speech, partly to a metaphysical ontology, or to what Hegel has called speculative logic. If we consider, however, the imposing rôle which was played in the scientific life and action of the middle ages by the Public Acts of Disputation, those tournaments of the learned world, we may well conceive what an unnameable charm dialectic, as the art of disputation, must have had for the men of that time. How close to hand lay the temptation to forget or to hold cheap everything compared with dialectic, and to look upon it as a world in itself, revolving round itself as its own absolute self-end!

To these logical and dialectical studies Wiclif, without doubt, devoted himself in his student days with the greatest zeal, as is attested by the numerous writings of this character produced in his mature age, which he left behind him. Indeed we may say that all his writings, upon whatever

subject and of whatsoever content, not excepting even his sermons, confirm this attestation, inasmuch as all of them are everywhere stamped with the dialectic genius of the author. But even if this testimony had not been forthcoming, it was the unchallenged and universally admitted brilliancy of his dialectical genius which acquired for Wiclif his high scientific fame, and without which it would never have been his.

But he was still far from overvaluing the arts of logic, as if these alone and by themselves constituted science. The mathematical sciences of the *Quadrivium* had also an extraordinary attraction for him. It is worthy of all consideration how often in his writings, and with how much love, he refers precisely to this department of science. At one time it is arithmetic or geometry which must do him service in illustrating certain truths and relations; at another time it is physical and chemical laws, or facts of optics or acoustics, which he applies to illuminate moral and religious truths. And not only in scientific essays is that the case, or only in sermons preached before the University, but even in his English sermons he makes unhesitating use of such illustrations.²⁶ But it was not in his riper years that Wiclif first began to apply himself to such natural studies: he had begun to do so in his youth, while he was still a student in Oxford. This is probable in itself, and is expressly confirmed by his own testimony, which we quoted on a preceding page. The reference there, indeed, is limited to collections which he had made in his younger days from works upon optics, but it is an obvious enough inference to suppose that he had occupied himself with other branches of natural science as well, *quando fuit junior*. No doubt it was under the instructions and by the personal example of some teacher

in the University that his sense and taste for these studies were first awakened and kindled; but who this teacher was we ask in vain. Neither the tradition of contemporaries or men of later times, nor any occasional expressions of Wiclif himself, afford us any knowledge upon the subject. It may, however, with some reason be conjectured that at the time of Wiclif's student life some disciples of the gifted Roger Bacon, who lived long in Oxford and survived till 1292, may still have been working there, and that the enthusiasm for natural science, which we are so often sensible of in Wiclif, was derived to him by this medium and from that great mind, who was called, not without reason, *Doctor Mirabilis*, and who, anticipating his namesake, Francis Bacon, had already, in the thirteenth century, grasped and exemplified the experimental method of science. It is matter of fact that among the learned men who were the ornaments of Oxford in the first half and in the middle of the fourteenth century, not a few were distinguished by mathematical, astronomical, and physical knowledge. Thomas Bradwardine, *e.g.*, who died in 1349, mentioned above as a theological thinker, was held in high estimation as a mathematician and astronomer; John Estwood, at one time a member of Merton College, was celebrated about 1360 for his astronomical attainments; as was also William Rede, who built the library of that college, and in 1369 became Bishop of Chichester.²⁷ These are only a few names selected out of a greater number of contemporaries who were all members of the University of Oxford as scholars, or masters and doctors. We are not, then, too bold if we conclude from such facts that in the first half of the fourteenth century there prevailed in that University a special zeal for mathematical and physical studies, which also laid hold of Wiclif.

But the natural sciences could as little enchain him, exclusively and for ever, as logic and dialectic had been able to do so. Wiclif passed over from the seven liberal arts to theology. This was, no doubt, the design with which his parents had from the first determined him for a life of study. He was to become a cleric, for the priestly calling was still, in the public opinion of that age, the highest in human society ; and if the Wiclif family cherished perhaps some ambitious wishes for the talented scion of their house, it was a course of theological education and the standing of priesthood, which in that age, and especially in England, formed the surest stepping-stones to the highest dignities of the State. But we find no warrant either in his life or in his writings to attribute such ambitious designs to himself. What drew him as a young man to theology was, in our judgment, neither an ambition which looked upon the science only as the means of attaining selfish ends, nor a deep religious need already awakened and consciously experienced, which sought the satisfaction of its own cravings in the Christian theology. It rather appears to us, in so far as the personal self-revelations scattered here and there in his writings justify a retrospective inference touching his student life, that the motive which impelled him, apart from all external considerations, to devote himself to theology, was entirely of an intellectual and scientific character. His passion for knowledge and his thirst for truth drew him to theology with all the more zeal, the more it was still regarded as the highest science of all, or the queen of the sciences. His industry as a student of Divinity was assured by the general studies which he had already passed through, and he devoted himself with indefatigable diligence to all the different branches into which theology was then divided, as is evident

from the contents of his own writings. The scholastic theology, it is true, was entirely wanting in the historical discipline of various kinds of our modern theology, and it knew only a small part of practical and exegetic theology, or the wide field of Biblical science, while almost the whole body of theological science took the form of systematic theology. That had been the case since the second half of the twelfth century—*i.e.*, since the Sentences of the Master *νατ' ἐξοχην*, the Lombard, Peter of Novara, had become the manual of dogmatic instruction.

But we should greatly err if we were to suppose, on this account, that the theological studies of the middle ages comprehended, as a general rule, only a narrow amount of scientific matter. On the contrary, they extended themselves to large fields of knowledge, of which the Protestant theology, at least of later and the latest times, takes little or no account. In particular, the Canon Law, since the time when it was collected and sanctioned, formed an extremely comprehensive and important subject of the theological course. Nor must we undervalue the reading of the Fathers, *e.g.*, of Augustin, and of the Doctors, *i.e.*, the Scholastics, which at the same time occupied, in some degree, the place of dogmatic history. Nor was the practice amiss of dividing the theological course into two stages, which we may briefly describe as the Biblical and the Systematic. The former came first in order. It consisted in the reading and interpretation of the Old and New Testaments. The interpretation took the form of Glosses, as in fact the whole of mediæval science developed itself from Glosses—Dialectics from Glosses on the writings of Aristotle—Law from Glosses on the *Corpus Juris*—Theology from Glosses first on the Bible and then on the Sen-

tences of the Lombard. That the original text of the Bible, in all this process, remained a book sealed with seven seals, and that only the Latin Bible, the Vulgate, could be the subject of translation, need not be dwelt upon after what has been said above. To interpretation proper (*expositio*), which consisted in explanations more or less short, verbal or also substantial, sometimes aphoristic in form, and sometimes running on at large, succeeded learned investigations, in the scholastic manner (*quæstiones*), in the form of disputational *excursus*.

As already hinted, the prefixing of a Biblical course to the dogmatic one was in itself commendable and suitable to the object in view, for the students in this way were taken, before everything else, to the fountain-head, and obtained possession of a knowledge of sacred history and Bible doctrine, if only this Biblical instruction was of the right kind. But there was lacking *immediateness* of view. Men looked into the Bible text only through the coloured spectacles of the Latin version. And that was not all: men were, at the same time, so entirely bound and pre-occupied by the whole mass of ecclesiastical tradition, that the possibility of an unprejudiced interpretation of the Scriptures was out of the question. The Biblical course, besides, was looked upon, not as that which laid the foundation of, and gave law to all the rest, but rather as an entirely subordinate preliminary discipline to theology properly so called. This appeared in the division of labour which was made in the matter of theological lectures; for bachelors of theology of the lowest degree were allowed to deliver lectures on the Bible, and usually this work was left to them alone; whereas bachelors of the middle and highest degrees (*baccalaurei sententiarii* and *formati*),²⁸ as well as the

doctors of theology, read on the Sentences of Peter Lombard, and sometimes on “sums” of their own. The “doctors” would have thought it beneath their dignity to lecture on the Biblical books; the bachelors who were relegated to this work were called in a depreciatory tone only *biblici*, in contrast to *sententiarii*. When Wiclif, then, went forward from this stage to what passed for the higher one, in which he studied what is now called systematic theology, it was chiefly, as already said, lectures on the Sentences of the Lombard which he had to listen to. And here, too, that mode of treatment prevailed which began by glossing the text of the master, and then followed this up with different “*Quæstiones*.” In addition, the numerous “*Disputations*” which were always held, served to promote the culture of the students. To which was added the reading of patristic and scholastic works. Among the latter, at the time when Wiclif studied, the works chiefly in favour, in Oxford at least, were the *Summa* of Thomas Aquinas, the writings of Bishop Robert Grossetête (*Lincolniensis*), and the comprehensive work of Archbishop Richard Fitzralph (*Armachanus*) against the errors of the Armenians. Beyond all doubt, Wiclif was a diligent reader of all these works, which he makes so frequent use of in his writings, in his student years. Further, as no one could have the credit of being a true theologian who was not at home in Canon Law, Wiclif came up to this last requirement in a degree which is best evinced in his yet unprinted works, in which he shows himself to have been quite a master of Canonical Jurisprudence; and that he had laid the foundations of this learning, even as a student, we assume with all confidence. When Lewis adds that Wiclif also studied Roman Law,²⁹ and the Canonical Law of England, the assumption is

indeed a probable one that he was no stranger to either of these branches of law, as is shown, not only by many of his writings, but also by the practical share which he took at a later period in ecclesiastico-political affairs; but whether he had thrown himself into the study of these subjects in his youth, is a point which we must leave in a state of uncertainty.

We have no positive data to show to what length of time Wiclif's student course extended; we can only arrive at a probable judgment upon the point with the help of our general knowledge of university usages in that age. We know that in England, as well as on the Continent, university life in the middle ages was accustomed to claim a far longer period of study than at present. It has been truly said that "men were not then misers with their time."³⁰ To study for ten years was by no means uncommon; for two years, at least, were allowed to the *Trivium*, and as many to the *Quadrivium*, so that four years at the shortest were taken up by the general sciences in the Faculty of Arts. But the study of theology in its two stages lasted for seven years as a rule, not seldom even longer, although in some cases also not so long, but even then for five years at the least. We shall, therefore, scarcely err if we suppose that Wiclif gave six years to the study of theology, and it can scarcely be too high an estimate if we reckon up his whole term of study to a decade of years. And if we were right in our conjecture above, that he entered the University about the year 1335, the end of his curriculum would have to be placed about the year 1345. Later data of his life say nothing, at the least, against this computation. At all events, we must assume that he had already taken all

the academic degrees in order, up to that time, with the single exception of the theological doctorship. Thus, without doubt, he had become *baccalaureus artium*, and two or three years later *magister artium*. And again, after an interval of several years, he must have become bachelor of theology, or, as it was then expressed, bachelor of the *sacra pagina*. Whether before the year 1345 he became licentiate of theology must be left undetermined. Herewith we leave Wiclif's student years, and pass onward to his manhood.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II.

1. Leland had received in 1533, from Henry VIII., the commission to examine the libraries and archives of all cathedrals and monasteries, colleges and cities, and he employed six years in travelling all over England and Wales, in order to collect materials for a history of the kingdom. He spent other six years in working up these collections into an account of the antiquities of England, but the work was never finished, for his excessive labours brought on disease of the brain, and he died in 1552. His *Itinerarium*, however, in nine volumes, was published in Oxford 1710-1712.

2. *Itinerarium* V., 99. [They say] that John Wyclif Hæreticus [was borne at Spreswel, a poore village a good myle from Richemont.] I quote from Lewis, *History of Wyclif*, p. 1, note a. The words between brackets do not stand in Leland's original MS., but only in a transcript of Stowe. Vide Shirley, Fasc. Zizan. Introd. X., note 3.

3. Unde Wigclif hæreticus origenem duxit. *Collectanea*, I., 2, 329. Cited by Vaughan, *Life and Opinions*, I., 232, note 8.

4. Shirley, Introd. XI.; Vaughan, *Life and Opinions*, I., 233; and John Wycliffe, a Monograph, 1854, p. 5 f.

5. Athenæum, 1861, 20th April, p. 529.

6. In 1853 the population of the little village did not reach 200 souls.

7. Vaughan's Monograph, p. 2 f.

8. Dibdin, *Observations on a Tour through almost the whole of England*. London, 1801, 4to, I., 261 f.

9. Kohl, *Reisen in England and Wales*, 1841, II., 50 f, 123, 165, 178. E.g., people say *lig* instead of lie; to *spier anybody* (aufspiären), instead of to ask or inquire; *I do not kenn*, instead of know.

10. In 1362 a certain Robert of Wycliffe was made parish priest of Wycliffe by Catherine, widow of Roger Wycliffe; and in the following year we find a William of Wycliffe presented to the same place. In the interval, however, the patronage had changed hands, for the patron in 1363 is John of Wycliffe, who, we may conjecture, was the son, now come to his majority, of Catherine and her deceased husband, Roger Wycliffe.

11. Whitaker, *History of Richmondshire*, I., 197, quoted by Vaughan, *Monograph*, p. 5; and Register of the Archbishop of Canterbury, also quoted by Vaughan, p. 548.

12. *Vide* the Documents from the Episcopal Register of Durham, in Vaughan's Monograph, p. 545 f.

13. On the orthography of the family name Wiclis, I may here introduce the following remarks:—There was an endless variety of ways of spelling it in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and some of this variety has reappeared among English writers in recent times. Vaughan states that the name is written in nearly twenty different forms, but this is far from being a high enough estimate. I have found as many as twenty-eight varieties in the usage of these centuries. They divide themselves into two chief classes, according as the vowel used in the first syllable is *i* or *y*. The explanation is to be found in the generally wretched condition of orthography in the middle ages, which prevailed specially in the names of places, and in surnames taken from these. It was not merely that every author adopted at his own pleasure his own way of spelling such names, while preserving uniformity of usage after choosing it, but one and the same author or copyist allowed himself unbounded liberty and caprice in the writing of the same name, as Walsingham, the chronicler, does in the case of Wiclis, who writes the name in at least eight different forms. *Vide* the Critical Edit. of Riley, I., 335 f; II., 50 f.

As to the question of the best way of writing the name at the present day, this can best be decided, no doubt, upon the authority of documents nearest in date to Wiclis's own age. Now the oldest document of a strictly official character is the Royal Commission of 26th July 1374, in which Edward III. nominates the commissioners who were to negotiate with the Papal legates at Bruges. Wiclis was one of these commissioners, and the King's edict names him *Magister Johannes de Wiclis, Sacrae Theologiae Professor*. *Rymer's Foedera*, VII., 41. The same mode of writing the name I find not unfrequently occurring in other documents and MSS. of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, though for the most part in capricious variation with other spellings. The recent usage of most English scholars is to spell the name with *y* in the first syllable—*e.g.*, Wyclif (Shirley and Thomas Arnold); Wycliffe (Vaughan); or Wyckliffe (Todd); and it must be confessed that with Englishmen of the fourteenth century the *y* was an extraordinary favourite, and was often unjustifiably used, not only in foreign words, like *hysteria, dyaconus, peryodus*, etc., and in proper names, like *Ysaac, Yoseph, Hyspaniae, Lyncln*, etc., but even in pure English words, as *kyng, infyrmytyes*, even in *ys, yt*, instead of *is, it*. In making use, since 1853, of the contemporary spelling *Wiclis*, we employ an orthography which has not been antiquated but rather confirmed by the later development of the language, and which, at the same time, seems the simplest and most obvious.

14. Comp. Shirley, *Fasc. Zizan*, XI. f.

15. *Quum fui junior, et in delectacione vaga magis sollicitus, collegi diffuse proprietates lucis ex codicibus, perspectivæ, etc.* No. 53 of the Sermons on Saints' Days (*Evangelia de Sanctis*), MS. 3928 of the Imperial Library of Vienna. *Denis*, No. CD., fol. 106, col. 1.

16. Buddensieg (*Zeitschrift für Historische Theologie*, 1847, p. 302 f) follows Shirley in adopting a later rather than an earlier year than 1324 for Wiclis's birth, perhaps 1330, founding upon the age of his antagonist, the Carmelite friar, John Cunningham. But on the only point of importance to the validity of this argument

viz., the relation of the *birth year* of Cunningham to that of Wiclif, all positive evidence is wanting, so that what is gained by this combination is by no means clear.

17. Comp. Vaughan, John de Wycliffe, a Monograph, p. 16 f., where travelling and intercourse in England during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries are graphically described on the authority of ancient sources.

18. *Vide Extracts from the Bursars' Accounts of Queen's College as given by Shirley in an Excursus to the Fasciculi Zizaniorum*, p. 514 f. Vaughan, indeed, has maintained in his Life and Opinions of John de Wycliffe, and also in his more recent "Monograph," that Wiclif's name occurs in a list of the original members of the college, who entered it in 1340, immediately after its foundation. But Shirley, who lived in Oxford, gives the most positive assurance that no list of members of so early a date exists among the papers of the college, p. xiii.

19. Comp. *Wycliffe, his Biographers and Critics*, an article of Vaughan, in the British Quarterly Review, Oct. 1858. Printed separately, p. 26 f.

20. The Book of Statutes of the University of Leipzig for the first 150 years after its foundation. Edited by Friedrich Zarncke. Leipzig, 1861, 4to, 3, 42 f.

21. The Chronicler of St. Albans, Thomas Walsingham, commences his account of Wiclif under the year 1377, with the words, "Per idem tempus surrexit in Universitate Oxoniensi quidam Borealis, dictus Magister Joannes Wyclef," etc. Edited by Riley, I., 324.

22. It has been usual to ascribe to Gerbert in the tenth, and to Abelard and John of Salisbury in the twelfth century, a knowledge of Greek, but Schaarschmidt, in his *Johaannes Saresberiensis*, 1862, p. 108 f., has proved convincingly that they had no claim to this praise.

23. Greek proper names are often written in the Bohemian MSS. of Wiclif's works so erroneously as to be almost unrecognisable, e.g., *Pictagerus* instead of Pythagoras. *De veritate Sacrae Scripturae*, c. 12. And who would guess that "cassefatum" in the same MS. was meant to be nothing else but *κακίπατον?* But the false writing of a Greek word is not always to be put to the account of the copyist, for in one place, e.g., the mis-written word *apoceritus* (instead of apocryphus) is immediately followed by an etymological remark which presupposes *s* to have been written instead of *f*; the word, it is remarked, comes from *apo=de*, and *crisis=secretum*, because the subject is the secrets of the Church, or, according to others from *apos=large*, and *crisis=judicium*. *De Veritate Scripturae*, c. II. Another etymological attempt is no better—*clemosnia* is alleged to be compounded of *elemonia=misericordia*, and *sina*, or of *elia*, which comes from *Eli=God*, and *sina=mandatum*; it signifies, therefore, God's command. *De Civili Dominio*, III., c. 14, MS.

24. E.g., Wiclif, *Tractatus de statu innocentiae*, c. 4, quoad artes mathematicas quadriviales. Vienna MS., 1339 f., 244, col. 2-245¹. Roger Bacon is also wont to include the sciences of the *Quadrivium* under the general term *Mathematics*.

25. Comp. Reuter Johannes von Salisbury. Berlin, 1842, p. 9 f. Schaarschmidt *Johaannes Saresberiensis*. Leipzig, 1842, p. 61.

26. So in the 26th of his sermons on Saints' Days (*Evangelia de Sanctis*).

Vienna MS., 3928 ; also in the 51st sermon of the same collection, and in the 24th sermon of another collection, included in the same MS. vol. Explanations of this kind are not uncommon in his learned treatises, *e.g.*, in the *De Dominio Divino II.*, c 3 ; *De Ecclesia*, c. 5, etc.

27. John Lewis, History of the Life of Wiclif, following Leland's *De Scriptoribus Britannicis*.

28. Comp. Thurot, *De l'Organisation de l'Enseignement dans l'Université de Paris au Moyen-age*, 1850, p. 137 f.

29. John Lewis, History of the life of John Wiclif, p. 2.

30. Matter in Article, *Sorbonne*, in Herzog's *Theol. Realencylopädie*.

ADDITIONAL NOTES TO CHAPTER II., BY THE TRANSLATOR.

1. ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE EDUCATIONAL DISCIPLINE OF BALLIOL COLLEGE IN WICLIF'S TIME.

By the fundamental statutes of Devorguilla, which were still in full force in Wiclif's student days, it was provided as follows :—

" That the scholars speak Latin in common, and whoever acts anything against it, shall be rebuked by the principal. If they mend not after twice or thrice admonition, they are to be removed from common table, and eat by themselves, and be served last. If incorrigible after a week's space, to be ejected by the procurators.

" Every week a sophism to be disputed and determined in the house among the scholars by turns, so that they both *oppose* and *answer* ; and if any sophister profiteth so much that he may deserve in a short time to *determine* in the schools, then shall the principal tell him that he shall first determine at *home* among his fellows. At the end of every disputation the principal shall appoint the next day of disputing ; and shall moderate and correct the loquacious ; and shall appoint the sophism that is next to be handled, and also the opponent, respondent, and determiner, that so they may the better provide themselves for a disputation." *Vide* Wood's History and Antiquities of the Colleges and Halls in the University of Oxford, p. 71.

2. PROVISIONS OF THE STATUTES OF SIR PHILIP DE SOMERVILLE FOR THE STUDY OF THEOLOGY BY THE FELLOWS OF BALLIOL COLLEGE IN WICLIF'S TIME.

These Statutes came into operation in 1341, and assuming, as a high probability (the grounds of which will be found stated in an additional note at the end of Chap. III.), that Wiclif became a student of Arts and Theology at Balliol on his first coming to Oxford, these Provisions throw an interesting light upon the probable course of his theological studies. The Statutes empowered the Fellows, now increased from 16 to 22, to elect six of their number to hold Theological Fellowships, which they should continue to enjoy till, in due course, they obtained the usual degrees in Theology ; and the curriculum of study laid out for them was

a singularly liberal one. The men elected *ad intendendum sacrae theologiae* were to become *opponents* in the theological disputations in the sixth year of their studies, and were to continue to oppose for one year, or if it seemed expedient to the society, during two years. In the ninth or tenth year they were to read the Book of Sentences; and in the twelfth or thirteenth year they should be held bound to *commence, incipere*, in the same faculty, unless hindered by legitimate and honest cause. If, as is highly probable, Wiclit became one of these Theological Fellows of Balliol, his whole course of study in Arts and Theology must have extended, allowing four years for his Arts course, to sixteen or seventeen years, *viz.*, from 1335 to 1351 or 1352.

The utmost care was to be taken in the election of men to these Theological Fellowships; under the sanction of a solemn oath, none were to be chosen, "praeter honestos, castos, pacificos et humiles, ad scientiam habiles ac proficere volentes," and none who were not already "Regents in Arts."

3. The following extract from Anthony Wood's "History of the Colleges and Halls in the University of Oxford," Vol. I., sub-anno 1343, gives us a curious glimpse of the condition of philosophical parties in the University at the time when Wiclit was engaged in the profound study of the philosophy and theology of his age: -

A.D. 1343.—"Clashing controversies in disputations and writings among the learned sort, especially the followers and disciples of the authors of the Nominals and Reals (Occam and Scotus), both which sects were now so fixed in every house of learning that the divisions between the northern and southern clerks were now as great, if not more, as those before. Those of the north held, as 'tis said, with Scotus, and those of the south with Occam, and in all their disputations were so violent, that the peace of the University was not thereby a little disturbed. . . . Now, forasmuch as these controversies were frequent in Oxford, causing thereby great emulation, which commonly ended in blows, the statutes for the election of the Chancellor were, without doubt, made; for whereas about these times great variance fell out in the election of that officer, some aiming to have him a northern, others a southern man, divers statutes and injunctions, chiefly reflecting upon such disorders, were, I say, this year enacted, of which was that concerning two scrutators in the elections,—that is, that one should be a northern, the other a southern man, lest underhand dealing should be used, and consequently parties injured."

For further information concerning these two parties or factions in the University, see additional note at the end of Chap. III. Wiclit took side with the Scotists or Realists in these subtle disputations and "clashing controversies," and it is curious to reflect how much this philosophical preference may have been owing to the accident of his having been born a *Borealis* instead of an *Australis*. John Scotus *Erigena* himself was, of course, a north-countryman, and all north-countrymen in Oxford appear to have belonged to his following. The Balliol scholars in particular were the natural allies of the great Realist, for they claimed him to have been a Balliol man before he connected himself with Merton. For, as Savage dryly observes in his Ballio-fergus, "There is as much contending for the breeding-place of this rare man as hath been for the birth of Homer. We conjecture him to have been of this College of Balliol, inasmuch as he was by county of Northumberland, and of Duns there, as might be seen not only in Pitsaeus, but

DUNAS
SCOTUS

*see Erratum
at end of Vol. II.*

before every volume of his works in MSS. in our library, of the gift of Bishop Gray, but torn off in the time of the late war; and for that in Northumberland was the first endowment of our College. He lived anno 1300, which was after Devorgilla's Statutes, but before those of Sir Philip Somerville, yet not after the time when it was granted by the Pope that the scholars might live in the house after they became Masters of Art; and therefore he might, for that reason, depart from this to Merton College."

4. The following names of learned Fellows of Balliol College in Wiclif's time are given by Savage in his *Ballio-fergus*, and we probably discern in them two of the partners of the Reformer's studies in philosophy and divinity :—

" William Wilton, professor in his faculty, which could be no other than divinity, by the statutes of this house made by Sir Philip de Somervyll, after which he lived here and wrote many things :—

Super Priora Aristotelis.

Quaestiones de Anima.

Super Ethica.

He was Chancellor of the University in 1373.

" Roger Whelpdale, fellow of this house, afterwards Provost of Queen's, lastly Bishop of Carlisle, a great mathematician. He wrote many books, whereof in our College library are there—

Summularum logicalium.

De Universalibus.

De Aggregatis.

De Quanto et Continuo.

De Compositione Continui.

De Rogando Deo.

He lived in the time of Edward III., and was the first who enriched the library with MSS., besides those of uncertain donation."

5. The recent "Report" of Mr. Riley upon the Archives of Balliol, published by the "Royal Commission on Historical MSS.," 1874, has put us in possession for the first time of the following document : "a small parchment deed, in good preservation, with four seals appended in a mutilated state," which "throws light," as he remarks, "upon the studies of the house some forty years after its foundation, and is otherwise a very interesting document." It is quite in place here, as it describes a state of things which still prevailed in the College when Wiclif, in all probability, became a student of it in 1335, or even later, in 1340. It reveals also a state of dissatisfaction with existing arrangements and restrictions which had a great deal, no doubt, to do with the drawing up of the new statutes of 1341, which, as we gather from themselves, were not dictated by the College benefactor, Sir Philip de Somervyll, but had been agreed upon by mutual deliberation between him and the Master and Fellows, and had, no doubt, been suggested to him by them for the increased usefulness of the house. The substance of the document has been already given from Wood in Note I. of Additional Notes to Chap. I.

" Tenore praesentium pateat universis quod anno domini MCCCXXV. in Festo Sanctae Margaritae Virginis, dubitatione suborta et quaestione mota inter scholares domus de Balliolo in Oxonia, an liceret sociis ibidem commorantibus

aliam scientiam audire quam artes liberales, prout artes liberales intelliguntur, quae in Scholis Artistarum ab Artistis legi possunt; auditis et pensatis motivis hinc inde, ac sufficiente deliberatione praehabita, demum declaratum extitit, et diffinitum hujusmodi auditionem nullo modo licere, prout apparuit, secundum intentionem fundantis domum praedictum, in modo totaliter fore contra mentem ejusdem, necnon et contra consuetudines laudabiles per socios domus ejusdem hactenus approbatas et diutius usitatas. Et ideo inhibitum fuit et interdictum per Magistros Robertum de Leycestria de ordine Fratrum minorum Sacrae Paginae Professorem, et Nicolaum de Tyngewick Doctorem in Medicina et Baccalarium Sacrae Theologiae, tunc Magistros extraneos domus antedictae, ni aliquis socius domus ejusdem, Magister vel Scolaris aliquam facultatem audiat, seu eidem intendat in pleno termino seu vacatione, praeter artes liberales quae ab Artistis in Scolis artium de jure legi possunt, prout superius est expressum. Acta sunt ista in aula de Balliolo, coram tota communitate ipsa non reclamante, die Sanctae Margaretæ Virginis anno supradicto, praesentibus Magistris, Sacrae Theologiae professoribus, Magistro Ricardo de Camsale, et Magistro Waltero de Horkeslaw, una cum Magistris Ricardo filio Radulphi et Ricardo de Retford qui omnes quondam dictae domus socii extiterunt; quibus omnibus et singulis dicta diffinitio et inhibitio justa simpliciter videbatur. Et si aliquis contra istam inhibitionem aut injunctionem verterit, ac legitime monitus per Principalem dictae domus desistere noluerit tanquam rebellis Statutis et Constitutionibus domus praedictae, arbitrio magistrorum qui pro tempore fuerint, merito puniatur. Et ne istud factum postea in dubium revocetur, Sigilla praedictorum Magistrorum Roberti et Nicolai, una cum Sigillis Domini Cancellarii Universitatis Oxoniae et Decani ejusdem villae sunt apposita. Et nos Cancellarius Universitatis Oxoniae et Decanus ejusdem villae Sigilla nostra ad rogatum dictorum magistrorum apposuimus in perpetuam memoriam praemissorum. Scriptum Oxoniae in festo Sancti Jacobi Apostoli anno superius praedicto."

"The above-named Richard Fitzralph was afterwards the celebrated Archbishop of Armagh, also known as St. Richard of Dundalk, the antagonist of the Mendicant orders."

CHAPTER III.

WICLIF'S QUIET WORK IN OXFORD—1345-1366.

SECTION I.—*Wiclid as a Member of Balliol and Merton.*

IN commencing this period of Wiclid's life with the year 1345, we have before us two full decades of years during which he in no way appeared, as yet, upon the stage of public life, either in Church or State. That is the reason why, in those chronicles which record the history of England in the fourteenth century, there does not occur the slightest mention of his person during these years. In fact it is not till ten years later still, that the chroniclers mention him for the first time (1377). It is for this reason that we designate this stage of his life, the period of his quiet work. And Oxford was the exclusive field of his work during all these twenty years.

We have to think of Wiclid at this time as a member in full standing of a college (*socius, fellow*), as one of the Regent Masters (*magistri regentes*), *i.e.*, as a man taking an active part in the independent, and in some sense republican government of his own college and of the whole academic body—a position to which he had been in due order admitted, after passing through certain stages of academic study, and after he had acquitted himself of certain learned tasks (disputations and the like).

The college, indeed, of which Wiclid became a Fellow, is a question which lies under as much uncertainty as that other which has been discussed in the last chapter, viz.: what

college it was with which he had been previously connected as a scholar.

Since the appearance of Lewis's life in 1720, the common understanding has been that he was first a Fellow of Merton College, and afterwards, about the year 1360, was promoted to the presidency of Balliol College.¹ In support of the first point, there exists a single documentary proof, but this a proof not absolutely free from question. It consists of an entry in the Acts of Merton College, according to which, in January 1356, "John Wiclid" held the office of seneschal or rent-master of the college.² This has hitherto been understood of our Wiclid, without hesitation; but Shirley maintains, on the contrary, that that notice probably refers to his namesake and contemporary, John Wiclid or Wycliffe, who, according to trustworthy documents, was parish priest of Mayfield. The grounds upon which this scholar relies are the following:—The fact is certain beyond challenge, that the Reformer Wiclid and no other was Master of Balliol in 1361. Now, the relations which existed between this college and the Wiclid family, make it natural to presume that he belonged to Balliol from the first; while, on the other hand, it is in the highest degree improbable that the members of the college would have chosen for their Master a man who was a member of another college (Merton).³ The difficulty presented by this last remark will find its solution in an inquiry which we shall enter upon immediately; and as to Shirley's first ground of doubt, it is obvious to reply that John Wiclid of Mayfield is still also a Wiclid, and therefore stands as nearly related to Balliol College as our Wiclid, and to Merton College no nearer than he. Thus the most important element of the question still continues to be the established fact, that our Wiclid was Master

of Balliol in 1362. We are unable, for our part, to recognise any decisive weight in the critical observations of Shirley, in opposition to the view which has hitherto prevailed, that Wiclif for some time was a member of Merton. On the other hand, we believe that we are able to throw some new light upon a subject which has hitherto been somewhat obscure, and this, not by means of mere conjectures, but of documentary facts.

The difficulty lies chiefly here, that it has been found hard to explain the frequent change of colleges through which Wiclif is alleged to have passed, inasmuch as according to the older tradition, he was first admitted into Queen's, then transferred to Merton, and was soon thereafter made Master of Balliol; or, in case we set aside Queen's College (as the mention of it in connection with Wiclif's student-life is unhistorical), and prefer to assume that he belonged from the first, as a scholar, to Balliol, then it becomes almost stranger still to suppose that Wiclif should have afterwards left this college and become a member of Merton, and then should have returned again to Balliol, and that too in the capacity of Master. But precisely here is the point upon which we think we are able to throw light, from a document which, till now, has hardly been considered in relation to the subject. We refer to the Papal Bull of 1361, first published by Lewis, not indeed in the original, but in extensive extract, in which the incorporation of the parish church of Abbotsey with Balliol Hall (so the college was then called) is approved and sanctioned.⁴ This apostolic writ makes reference, at the same time, to the representation which the members of Balliol had submitted to the Papal See in support of their petition for the confirmation of the incorporation. From this representation we see pretty clearly what had

been the financial condition of the college up to that time. For it states that by means of the pious beneficence of the founder of the college, there are indeed numerous students and clerics in the hall, but aforetime each of them had only received*—farthings weekly; *and as soon as they became Masters of Arts, they had immediately to leave the Hall*, so that, on account of poverty, they were no longer able to continue their studies, and found themselves, in some instances, obliged to have recourse to trade for the sake of a living. Now, however, Sir William Felton, the present benefactor of the foundation, formerly patron of Abbotsey, but who had already, in 1341, transferred his right of collation to Balliol College,⁵ has formed the design, out of sympathy with its members, to increase the number of scholars, and to make provision for their having the common use of books in all the different faculties; and also, that every one of them should have a sufficient supply of clothing and twelve farthings a-week; and further, *that they should be at liberty to remain quietly in the Hall, whether they were masters and doctors or not, until they obtained a sufficient church-living, and not till then should they be obliged to leave.*

From this it appears as clearly as we could possibly desire, that up to the year 1360 the extremely limited resources of Balliol had made it necessary that every one belonging to the foundation should leave as soon as he obtained his Arts degree, and that the incorporation of the Church of Abbotsey, according to the intention of the benefactor, was designed, among other things, to provide that in future the members of Balliol, even when they became masters or doctors, might continue to live in the college as they had done before. If, therefore,

* The blank here should be filled up with the number 8; *vide Additional Note I.* at the end of the chapter.

Wiclit, as we have reason to presume, was received into Balliol as a scholar, the circumstances of the college at that time must have obliged him to leave it as soon as he graduated. As now the above-mentioned notice in the papers of Merton mentions John Wiclit, in 1356, as seneschal of the college, there is not only nothing any longer standing in the way of identifying this "Wyclif" with our Wiclit, but we have even the satisfaction of learning from this source what had become of him since the time when, as we may now presume, he was obliged to leave Balliol as a promoted magister. And as it was customary in the colleges that every one behoved to be for some considerable length of time a Fellow before he could undertake such a function as that of seneschal, the inference may be allowed that Wiclit had been for several years a member of Merton before he entered upon the office, and in all probability since the date of his graduation as a master. The circumstances just mentioned serve to show, in addition, how easily it might come to pass that Wiclit, although he had left Balliol, where he had originally studied, might yet at a later period be called back again to that college, and even be placed at its head; for as his leaving was by no means a spontaneous act of his own, but was entirely due to the financial situation of the college, every surmise that it may have given rise to some feeling to his disadvantage is entirely out of the question, whereas, under other circumstances, such a feeling might have stood in his way to his subsequent promotion to the headship of the house.

We have thus been able, we believe, to clear up a point which has hitherto been obscure. But however this may be, the fact at least stands perfectly firm that Wiclit was Master of Balliol in the year 1361. This appears from four

different documents which are preserved in the archives of this college, and which have all a bearing upon the fact that Wiclif, as "Magister seu Custos Aulæ de Balliol," takes possession, in name of the college, of the already mentioned incumbency of Abbot'sley in the county of Huntingdon, which had been incorporated with the foundation.⁶ From these documents it appears that Wiclif must already before this date have been Master or Warden of Balliol; and yet it cannot have been long previously that he acquired the dignity, for in November 1356 the name of Robert of Derby occurs as master. Nor was even he Wiclif's immediate predecessor, but another whose name was William of Kingston. Three of these documents, dated 7th, 8th, and 9th April 1361, have immediate relation to the Act of Incorporation itself, while the fourth document, dated July in the same year, is that along with which Wiclif, as master, sent to the Bishop of Lincoln, John Gynwell, the Papal bull wherein the incorporation was sanctioned. But before this last date Wiclif had been nominated by his college, 16th May 1361, to be Rector of Fillingham. This is a small parish in the county of Lincoln, lying ten miles north north-west from the city of Lincoln. This appointment did not imply that Wiclif immediately thereafter left the University and lived entirely in the country, in order to devote himself to pastoral duties. This does not appear to have been contemplated in the nomination. Agreeably to law and usage prevalent at the period, he remained after as before, a member of the University, with all the powers and privileges belonging to him as such; and without doubt he continued, for all important purposes, to reside in Oxford. What provision he made for the work of the parish, perhaps by the appointment of a curate, and whether, perhaps, during the recesses of the

University he resided regularly in Fillingham, in order to discharge his pastoral duties in person—these are points which we are obliged to leave undecided. But it is matter of fact that an entry exists in the Acts of the See of Lincoln, to which diocese Fillingham belonged, from which it appears that Wiclif applied for and obtained in 1368 the consent of his bishop to an absence of two years from his parish church of Fillingham, in order to devote himself to the studies of Oxford.⁷ It may be conjectured that he had obtained similar leave of non-residence on previous occasions, in each instance for a like period of two years.

On the other hand, his nomination to the rectorship of a landward parish made it a necessity that he should relinquish the mastership of Balliol. That this took place in point of fact may be inferred from a circumstance of which documentary proof still exists in the account-books of Queen's College, that Wiclif, in October 1363, and for several years afterwards, paid rent for an apartment in the buildings of that college. We know, besides, from other sources, that in 1366 a certain John Hugate was Master of Balliol.

During the twenty years which we have in view in the present chapter, Wiclif's work in Oxford was twofold, partly scientific, as a man of scholastic learning; and partly practical, as a member, and for some time president of a college, and also as *Magister regens* in the general body of the University. That he did not apply himself continuously to pastoral labours in Fillingham (from 1361) may be assumed with certainty. With respect to his scientific labours, he commenced while yet only a master in the faculty of Arts by giving disputations and lectures on philosophical subjects, particularly in Logic. From many passages of his extant manuscript works it appears that he gave courses

of such lectures with zeal and success. But from the time when he became Bachelor of Theology, he was at liberty to deliver theological lectures in addition—*i.e.*, only, in the first instance, on the Biblical books, not on the Sentences of the Lombard, which latter privilege was reserved exclusively for the higher grades of Bachelorship and the Doctors of Theology. But the Biblical lectures which he delivered, it may be conjectured, proved of the greatest use to himself, for, in teaching the Scriptures to others, he first learned the true meaning of them himself (*docendo discimus*) ; so that these lectures unconsciously served as a preparation for his later labours as a Reformer.

But Wiclf had also the opportunity of acquiring practical ability, and of making himself useful, by taking part as a Fellow of Merton College in the administration of that society. Doubtless, the fruitfulness and utility of his activity in this position contributed essentially to bring about his appointment to the headship of Balliol. What was chiefly valued in him in this relation appears in the clearest manner from the document by which the Archbishop of Canterbury, Simon Islip, an earlier fellow-student of his, appointed Wiclf to the Presidency of “Canterbury Hall.” The archbishop gives as his reason for this nomination, apart from Wiclf’s learning and estimable life, his practical qualifications of fidelity, circumspection, and diligence.⁹

SECTION II.—*Wiclf as Head of Canterbury Hall and Doctor of Theology.*

IN the meantime, as has just been mentioned by anticipation, Wiclf had been appointed to the headship of a small newly-founded college. But this position also, without any

blame on his part, proved to be one of only short duration. We mean the position of Warden of Canterbury Hall—a point in his biography, however, which is attended with more than one historical difficulty. Up till 1840 it was the universally received understanding that Wiclif was for some time head of this new hall.

Simon Islip, Archbishop of Canterbury, founded a Hall in Oxford which should bear the name of the Arch-episcopal See. Its first warden was a monk of violent character named Woodhall, under whom there was no end of contention among the members; to remedy which the Archbishop removed Woodhall from the headship, and replaced three other members, who were monks, by secular priests. In 1365 he appointed “John of Wiclif” to be second warden, and entrusted to him the oversight of the eleven scholars, who were now all世俗ans. But in the following spring (26th April 1366), the active Archbishop Islip deceased, and was succeeded, as Primate of England, in 1367, by Simon Langham, a man who had previously been a monk, and continued to cherish a thoroughly monastic spirit. By him Wiclif was deposed from his wardenship, and the three members who had been introduced along with him were removed from the college. Langham restored Woodhall to the headship, and the three monks who had been deprived along with him were once more made members. Wiclif and the three Fellows appealed from the Archbishop to the Pope, but the process proved an uncommonly protracted one, and ended in 1370 with the rejection of Wiclif and his fellow-appellants, and with the confirmation of their opponents in their several places.

The termination of this affair exceeds by several years the limit of the present period of Wiclif’s life; but for the sake

of connection we shall dispose of the whole subject in the present place. From the fourteenth century down to our own time, this chapter of Wiclid's history has been turned to polemical use against him by his literary adversaries. They knew how to attribute his antagonistic tendencies, and especially his attacks upon the Pope and the monastic system, to motives of petty personal revenge for the losses which he had incurred on this occasion, and thus to damage his character and fair fame. We shall, therefore, have to inquire whether this imputation is well-grounded or not, keeping before us, however, here as always, the truth as our highest aim.

We might, indeed, have entirely dispensed with the elucidation, if it could be shown that this whole account had been smuggled into the biography of the precursor of the Reformation only by confounding him with another individual of the same name. This view of the subject has, in fact, been recently entertained and defended with no inconsiderable amount of learning and acutenesss. It is due to truth, however, at once to state that it was by no means the design of the scholars whom we have now in our eye in this investigation, to offer any defence against these imputations, but simply and solely to bring to the light the historical facts of the case as they really occurred.

The historico-critical difficulties which have here to be solved, may be comprised in two questions :—

1. Is John Wiclid, the Warden of Canterbury Hall, identical with Wiclid the precursor of the Reformation, or is he not?

2. Was the appointment of Wiclid to the headship of the Hall, and of those three secular priests or members of the same, contrary to the terms of the foundation, or not?

We shall be obliged to distinguish these two questions, but we cannot keep them mechanically separate in our inquiry.

In August 1841, there appeared an article in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, whose anonymous author was professedly a member of the Court of Heraldry—*Courthope*. This article first made the attempt to show that “John Wyclye” the Warden of Canterbury Hall, was a person to be carefully distinguished from the celebrated Wiclit.¹⁸ The writer had been led to this conclusion in the course of drawing up a local history of the Archbishop's Palace of Mayfield, in Sussex. He discovered, that is to say, in the Archives of Canterbury, that on the 20th July 1361, a “John Wyclye” was appointed parish priest of Mayfield by Archbishop Islip—the same prelate who, four years later, was to nominate John Wyclye to the presidency of Canterbury Hall; and, what is remarkable, the deed of this later nomination is dated at Mayfield, 9th December 1365, where Islip seems to have had his ordinary residence since the time when he appointed “John of Wyclye” to the parish. Further, the tone in which the Archbishop speaks in the deed, of the learning and excellent qualities of the man whom he nominates to the wardenship, presupposes intimate personal acquaintance, and does not leave the impression that this commendation was mere language of form.¹¹ In addition to all this, it seemed to the critic to be a circumstance worth consideration, that the name itself in both documents, viz., in the deed of appointment to the parish, and in that of appointment to the wardenship, is written with *clyve* in the second syllable, whereas the name of our Wiclit and the Warden of Balliol is found in all documents written with *lif* or *liffe*. Last of all, the critic lays stress upon the fact that the Archbishop shortly before his death, in April

1366, was taking steps to allocate the income of the parish church of Mayfield to the support of the Warden of the Hall, which, however, was prevented by his death. But all this appears decidedly to imply that it was the parish priest of Mayfield who was promoted to the Wardenship of the Hall; he was, however, in 1380 transferred to the neighbouring parish of Horstedkaynes, and received a prebend in the cathedral church of Chichester. He died in 1383, only one year before our Wiclit.

This learned and acute investigation attracted much attention. On the one hand it commended itself to many, and there were not wanting men of learning who went even farther, and undertook to prove that three or even four men of the name of John Wiclit, and all belonging to the clerical order, lived at the same time. This last assertion we leave on one side as resting upon a mis-understanding. But all the less ought we to accept, untested, the view that it was John Wiclit, parish priest of Mayfield, and afterwards of Horstedkaynes, and not the celebrated Wiclit, who was promoted by Islip to the Wardenship of the New Hall in Oxford, deposed by the Archbishop's successor, and thereby occasioned to carry on a process before the Roman Curia. For this view has been accepted and supported with additional arguments by other investigators, and especially by the late Professor of Ecclesiastical History in Oxford, Walter Waddington Shirley.¹² The latter is also of opinion that that John Wyyclif, who is mentioned as member and seneschal of Merton College in 1356, must likewise have been the Wyyclive of Mayfield, and not our Wiclit. To this last point, which we believe we have already disposed of by what was said upon it above, we shall, however, have occasion once again to return. But

the question whether John Wiclif, the head of Canterbury Hall, is, or is not, one and the same person with our Wiclif, is one which (if we mistake not) still remains to-day undecided, inasmuch as Shirley and others answer it in the negative, while Vaughan and the learned editors of the Wiclif Bible, Rev. Josia Forshall and Sir Frederick Madden, affirm it in the most decided manner.

Let us first examine the grounds which are alleged against the identity of our Wiclif, and in support of the identity of the less celebrated Wiclif of Mayfield, with the Warden of Canterbury Hall. 1. The argument founded upon the form of the name is converted, upon closer examination, into an argument in favour of the identification of our Wiclif with the Warden of Canterbury Hall. By careful investigation among documents of the period, the late Prebendary Wilkinson established the fact that the name of the parish priest of Mayfield is always written Whitcliff, or Whytelyfe, etc., *i.e.*, is uniformly written with *t* in the first syllable, while the name of our Wiclif and of the Warden of that Hall never appears with *t* in the first syllable. 2. The argument founded upon the circumstance that the Archbishop's deed of appointment is dated at Mayfield is a precarious one, for this fact, taken by itself, by no means necessarily leads to the inference which has been drawn from it. 3. Hence this second ground is combined with a third, viz., that the terms of the deed imply a personal acquaintance of the Archbishop with his nomine. This is undoubtedly the case. But it does not follow from this that the Archbishop's nominee was the parish priest of Mayfield, with whom, of course, from his frequent residence there for several years, he was perfectly well acquainted. For it is certainly quite possible that the Archbishop was also personally acquainted with our

Wiclid; and if it is true, as from what has been said above there is no reason to doubt, that the Wiclid known to fame was for several years after his student course a member of Merton College, it is extremely probable that he and the said Archbishop, who was also of the same college, were from that time on a footing of mutual acquaintance and regard. The other points alleged in support of the same view, we leave aside as of less importance; but the observations already made warrant us, we believe, to maintain that the grounds which have been alleged against the identity of our Wiclid with that personage of the same name who was for a short time at the head of Canterbury Hall, prove absolutely nothing.

On the other hand, if we are not quite mistaken, the positive testimonies in favour of the identity are entirely decisive. 1. The oldest testimony in support of it is that of a younger contemporary of Wiclid. The learned Franciscan and Doctor of Theology, William Woodford, who wrote against Wiclid while he was still living, and of whom Wiclid, so far as I can find, speaks with genuine respect, in a controversial treatise, entitled *Serenty-Two Queries concerning the Sacrament of the Altar*, of the year 1381, mentions, as a well-known fact, the circumstance, that Wiclid was driven by prelates and endowed monks from his position in Canterbury Hall. Still further, Woodford brought Wiclid's subsequent antagonism to the endowed orders into a connection of his own suggestion with that incident of his life.¹⁴ This testimony seems scarcely to leave room for any remaining doubt, because its date reaches up to Wiclid's own lifetime. It has been attempted, notwithstanding, to diminish the weight of Woodford's testimony by the observation that he could not have had any personal recollection of

that incident, for as his latest writing occurs in the year 1433, he must have been still a boy at the time of the event in question; besides which, these *Seventy-Two Querries* were written, it is alleged, in great haste, and in a time of strong excitement and zealous controversy, when every damaging story about Wiclif might be expected to find willing ears; last of all, Woodford never repeated this allegation in his later writings, and his scholar, Thomas of Walden, never once touches upon this story in his great polemical work—from which it may be concluded that Thomas of Walden had no belief in its truth.¹⁵ To all which we reply that though Woodford was a younger man than Wiclif, he must yet have lived in Oxford with him for some considerable time, as is manifest from the language of Wiclif in the passage quoted in note 15, last referred to. He could very well then have an exact and certain knowledge of the whole affair; and his manner of referring to the subject corresponds well with this, for it is no more than a short incidental allusion to a well-known fact, introduced chiefly for the sake of the alleged connection between the fact and Wiclif's polemics against the endowed orders. Nor can the circumstances that Woodford does not recur to the subject in his later writings, and that Thomas of Walden, who wrote after him, never once mentions it, be of any avail as proof against the truth of a fact vouched for by such testimony. It is well known how precarious arguments *a silentio* are wont in general to be. We are, therefore, still prepared to assign to the testimony of Woodford a decisive weight in support of the fact that our Wiclif was nominated to the headship of Canterbury Hall, but before two years had passed away was again driven from his position.*

* *Vide* additional note 2, at the end of the chapter.

2. It is remarkable that in Wiclif's own writings a passage is found where he treats of that affair; and it is not in the nature of a passing allusion, as in Woodford, but a pretty full investigation of the subject. But Wiclif handles the matter so much upon the merits, and so little as a personal affair, that at first sight it might admit of a doubt whether he had himself really taken any part in the business. In fact his manner of speaking has even been thought to admit of being used as a testimony against the identity of his person with that of the head of the Hall so often mentioned. With all the more exactness must we look into the language which he employs, having regard to the whole connection of the passage.¹⁶ In the section of his book, *De Ecclesia*, containing the passage, he is treating of the property of the Church, and the question in chap. 16, is whether the provision of *landed property* for the Church is really a necessity and a benefit for her, and not rather a mischief. In particular, the author investigates the question, assuming, as he does, the pretended Donation of Constantine to be a historical fact, whether Sylvester did right in accepting that Donation. This question Wiclif answers in the negative. But he also brings under review all the arguments adduced by opponents against this negative. Among others, he brings into view the fifth objection laid against his opinion, viz., that if Bishop Sylvester in Rome committed a sin in accepting the permanent endowment of the Church with lands, then in like manner the colleges in Oxford have sinned in accepting gifts of temporal estates for the support of poor clerics, and it must consequently be the duty of the members of these colleges spontaneously to forego the continued possession of such lands; yea, they ought in strict propriety to solicit their promoters and patrons to take back again these

dangerous rights and properties. But by such a course essential injury would be done to the religious liberality of the people, and not only to the income of the clergy derived from such foundations, but also to the provision made for the poor. The indirect mode of proof used by his opponents takes the form of reasoning *per deducens ad familiare inconveniens*, *i.e.*, they are fain to deduce from Wiclif's contention a consequence which touches very nearly the interest both of himself and the corporation to which he belongs (*familiare*), and the intolerableness of which or its practical mischievousness (*inconveniens*) must at once be obvious.

In his reply Wiclif denies the pretended logical exigency of this reasoning, as if it followed from his premises that all endowments for the benefit of the University were sinful, which is by no means the case; but he urges that it is still possible for a sin of inadvertence to creep in, not only in a thing which is good in itself, but also in a transaction which is morally good in respect to the personal motive from which it proceeds. And this he will make plain *in familiariore exemplo*, in an example lying still nearer to himself, or touching himself still more closely.¹⁷ But this example is none other than the incident of the foundation of a college in Oxford by Archbishop Islip. He does not mention Canterbury Hall by name, but that this college and no other is meant cannot admit of the slightest doubt. Wiclif mentions two chief particulars in relation to this Hall: first, its original foundation by Simon Islip, and its endowment with landed property; and next, the upsetting of that foundation by Archbishop Simon Langham, to whom he gives the name of Anti-Simon, because, with the same baptismal name as Islip, his way of proceeding was antagonistic. To the founder he ascribes a pious motive in his provision for the college, even a more

pious intention than had found place in the provision of any of the monasteries of England; but Wiclif was of opinion, notwithstanding, that Islip had acted in the matter not without sin, for the incorporation of a parish church, or the alienation of an estate in mortmain, has never taken place without sin, both in the giver and the receiver.¹⁸ But as to Islip's successor in the primacy, who had completely upset his arrangements in reference to the college, Wiclif maintains, in the most distinct manner, that he sinned in so doing, much more than Islip himself. Now, the circumstance that Wiclif in this passage does not bring his own person into view in a perfectly unmistakeable manner, as one who was concerned in the college and the change which it underwent, is insufficient to shake our conviction that he had this personal concern in it notwithstanding. The objective mode of speaking in the third person we are familiar with in other instances; and that the incident had a special relation to his own person, he gives us clearly to understand in his use of the words *familiarius exemplum*.

Fully ten years had passed away, when he wrote thus, since his removal from the position of Warden of Canterbury Hall, for the book *De Ecclesia*, which contains the statements before us, was written, as we undertake to show with precision, in the year 1378. The affair had long ceased to give pain; and although at the time he had felt it keenly, the author was now able to speak of it with perfect coolness, and simply as a matter of fact. Like his opponent Woodford, however, Wiclif speaks of the incident in a manner which implies that it was one well known to all; for, with the exception of the founder himself, he does not mention a single name—neither that of the College nor that of Langham, nor even a single name of any of the members of the College earlier or later.

And it is only a few features of the business which he brings into prominence, and these only such as were of substantive importance. On the one hand, that the design of the endowment of the foundation was a truly pious one; that the statutes and arrangements of the house were worthy of praise, and fitted to be of advantage to the Church; and that only secular clerics—*i.e.*, learned men not belonging to any of the monastic orders—were meant to devote themselves therein to science. On the other hand, Wiclf mentions no more than that, after Islip's death, his instructions were frustrated, the members who were in the enjoyment of the foundation dispossessed, and several people introduced who were by no means in need of it, but on the contrary in very comfortable circumstances. But it is not mentioned that the latter were monks exactly, and members of the Benedictine foundation of Canterbury, although this comes out indirectly from the connexion; while it is plainly told that the whole change in the membership of the College had been carried through by means of false representations (*commenta mendacii, fucus*), and not without simony besides (*symoniace*).

This occurrence, Wiclf thinks, must be a warning to the Bishop of Winchester, to use foresight that a similar fate may not befall his own foundation. William of Wykeham, one of the most leading prelates and statesmen of England in the fourteenth century († 1404), had occupied himself since 1373 with the foundation of a great college in Oxford; he had already formed a society in that year, for whose maintenance he provided; in 1379 he concluded his last purchases of ground for the building of the house; and on the 13th of April 1386, several years after Wiclf's death, took place the solemn consecration of “St. Mary's College of Winchester in Oxford,” which soon afterwards received the

name of New College, under which it still flourishes at the present day. The way in which Wiclif speaks of this foundation of Wykeham shows clearly that the fact was not yet a completed one, but was still only in the stage of preparation. Otherwise, the advice which he modestly gives the bishop (*consulendum videtur domino Wyntoniensi, etc.*) would have come too late.¹⁹

Let us now proceed to examine the second question, Was the appointment of Wiclif as Warden of Canterbury Hall, and of the three secular priests, William Selby, William Middleworth, and Richard Benger to be members of the same, contrary or not to the provisions of the foundation?

The opponents concerned answered this question, of course, in the affirmative. They represented the matter in this light: that the statutes of the College prescribed, as a fixed principle, that a Benedictine of the chapter of Canterbury must be warden, and that three monks in addition from the same chapter must be members; implying that Wiclif and those associated with him had put forward unwarranted claims in demanding that the government of the College should lie in the hands of secular priests, and that Wiclif should be made head. It was Wiclif and his friends, they alleged, who had carried through the proceeding of excluding from the College Henry Woodhall, the then warden, and those members who, like him, were Benedictines of Canterbury.²⁰

According to Wiclif's showing, the exact opposite of all this was the truth, viz., that Archbishop Islip had ordained that secular priests alone should study in the College; it was only after the death of the founder that members of the archiepiscopal chapter, in contrariety to his will, had placed themselves in possession. These two statements are

so directly contradictory as to nullify each other. It is necessary to look about for information from other sources in order to arrive at clearness on the subject. And fortunately such information is available in the eight documents relating to this business, which Lewis obtained from the archiepiscopal archives, and has published in the Appendix to his life of Wiclf. Two royal edicts in particular are here of importance. In the first, dated 20th October 1361, Edward III. grants his consent to the proposal of Archbishop Simon Islip to found a Canterbury Hall in Oxford, and to attach to and incorporate with this hall, as soon as it is erected, the Church, *i.e.*, the Church revenues of Pagham in Sussex. The second royal ordinance, of 8th April 1372, contains the confirmation of the Papal judgment of 1370, by which Wiclf and his associates of Canterbury Hall were finally excluded. In both these decrees mention is made of two classes of members of the college, who, according to the intention of the founder, were to live together in it—monks and non-monks;²¹ and in the second decree, consistently with this, a charge of departure from the terms of the original royal confirmation is laid equally against the determination of the founder himself, by which he subsequently set aside the monkish members, so that only non-monks should remain in the College, and against the Papal decision, in virtue of which, in all time coming, monks alone from the Benedictine Convent of Canterbury should be members.²² But notwithstanding this charge, Edward III. in the latter edict grants remission for these violations of the fundamental statute of Islip, but not without requiring the Prior and Convent of Canterbury to pay into the King's treasurer beforehand 200 marks,²³ a *naïve* condition, which confirms in the fullest manner the

accusation which, as we saw, Wiclid himself makes, that simony had had a part in the game. Thus, it appears that the royal confirmation of the foundation originally proceeded on the assumption that two classes of members should be united in the College, monks and non-monks.

This confirmation, however, was set forth before the new hall was actually founded, when the archbishop had first determined upon its plan, and was desirous of paving the way for carrying it out by obtaining the necessary consent on the part of the State. The document, therefore, allows conclusions to be drawn from it only in regard to the original intentions of the founder, but gives no assurance that when Islip, a year later (1362), actually completed the foundation and carried it into effect, that two-fold description of membership was ordained in the statutes of the foundation. In this connection it is in the highest degree worthy of attention that the archbishop himself, in his deed of 13th April 1363, wherein he gifts to the hall his estate of Woodford, refers, indeed, to the number of the members as twelve, who should form the College, but does not, in a single word, give it to be understood that part of the places therein must be filled with monks.²⁴ The deed of nomination, it is true, has a different sound, wherein, on 13th March 1362, the Prior and Chapter of Christ Church in Canterbury propose to Archbishop Islip for the headship of the new-founded Canterbury Hall in Oxford three of their brethren of the Benedictine Abbey (Henry Woodhall, Doctor of Theology, Dr. John Redingate, and William Richmond), from among whom he may himself appoint a warden. In this document, in fact, they refer themselves to an order made by the archbishop himself, in virtue of which this nomination should be made by them.²⁵ There is no room, therefore, to doubt that the

archbishop, in the first instance, desired that at least the head of his College should be taken from the Benedictine order, and more specifically from the chapter of Christ Church in Canterbury, and that he secured this by his statutes. But it does not appear that any provision was made by the deeds of foundation that, in addition to the dignity of the headship, three places of the membership must also be filled with monks;²⁶ but, as a matter of fact, there were found in the hall, during the first stage of its existence, in addition to Henry Woodhall, who was its first warden, three additional monks from the Benedictine monastery of Canterbury.

How it came to pass that a change in this respect was introduced does not clearly appear. The monk party represent the course which things took in this manner: that Wiclif and his associates (Selby, Middleworth, and Benger), in an overbearing spirit, and without warrant, put forth the claim that the government of the College behoved to be in the hands of the secular priests, and in particular that John Wiclif ought to be warden; and so they had expelled the said warden, Henry Woodhall, and the other Benedictines, from the College, and taken the property of the foundation into their own possession.²⁷ But that this representation is in contradiction to the actual course of the affair is evident, beyond any doubt, from the royal edict of 8th April 1372, before produced, in which it is said, in plain terms, that it was the archbishop himself who displaced the existing warden and those members who were monks, and allowed only those scholars who were not monks to remain, and who had appointed one man of the same category to the wardenship.²⁸

The testimony of this royal warrant is all the more trustworthy from its apparent impartiality, for with these words

is immediately joined the inculpatory remark, that this measure of the archbishop was in contradiction to the original approval on the part of the State; and the words of the document sound indeed as if Islip had not merely intervened in a passing act, but had put his hand to an essential alteration of the statutes. And it is at this point that the remark of Wiclif (*De Ecclesia*, c. 16) comes in, that Islip had appointed that secular clerics alone should study in the College, which also took effect. Taken by themselves, his words might, indeed, lead one to think that Wiclif is speaking of the original statute. But this is not the true sense: he is speaking rather of the last ordinance of the archbishop, making an alteration on the first statute; and the term *ordinance* can undoubtedly have this meaning. If we so take the words, the contradiction disappears which at first sight exists between Wiclif's representation of the proceeding and that contained in the royal edict. But the representation of the opposite party exhibited to the Papal curia, as gathered from the mandate of Urban V., is irreconcilable with both these representations, and must be characterised as a manifest misrepresentation of the facts and a malicious calumny. The result of our investigation, therefore, is the following:—That the appointment of Wiclif to the headship of Canterbury Hall was contrary to the original foundation-statutes as approved on the side of the State, but it proceeded upon an alteration of the first statutes subsequently made by the founder himself.

On 9th December 1365, Wiclif was nominated Warden of Canterbury Hall by Archbishop Islip. Five months from that date were not yet full when the worthy archbishop died (26th April 1366). His successor, Stephen Langham, was enthroned 25th March 1367, and on the sixth day thereafter

(31st March) he nominated John Redingate to be Warden of the Hall. Wiclif, of course, must have been previously deposed. The new Warden was a Benedictine of Canterbury, and one of the original members of the hall. Three weeks later, however (22nd April 1367), the archbishop recalled this nomination, and re-appointed the earlier head of the hall, Henry Woodhall, to the wardenship, to whose authority Wiclif should now, along with the other members, be subject.²⁹ But even so much as this reduced position in the college was not allowed to him. On the contrary, the restoration now destined by the monkish archbishop for Canterbury Hall, led to the exclusion of all the secular members. Wiclif and his fellows appealed from the archbishop to the Pope; but as Langham, in the next year after his being made archbishop, was promoted to the cardinalate, and went to Avignon, the issue of the appeal was a judgment by which Wiclif and his fellows were definitively expelled, and the college was thenceforward exclusively filled with monks of Christ Church in Canterbury.

This decision was at all events still more opposed to the original meaning and intention of the foundation, than that the hall should have been for a time exclusively in the enjoyment of men who were not monks. For from the first the secular element had at least outweighed the other, even if we assume, what is by no means proved, that, according to the original statutes, four members of the twelve behaved to be monks; still more if the only point fixed by the statutes was that the Head of the house should be a Benedictine of Canterbury, while the introduction of three other Canterbury monks was possibly not prescribed in the statutes, but had only proceeded from the free determination of the founder. Wiclif himself, as we

have seen, uses very strong language respecting the contrast in which the measures of the new archbishop stood to the ordering (more accurately the last ordering) of his predecessor (*eversum est tam pii patroni propositum. Anti-Simon, etc.*). And the government decree itself appears to look upon the last re-constitution of the college as a much more serious contradiction to the original foundation approved by the State than the alteration which was made by Islip himself; for of this latter it is only said that it was done *præter licentiam nostram supradictam*—beyond or in excess of our foresaid licence—whereas the exclusion of all secular members is declared to be *contra formam licentiae nostræ supradictæ*—in the teeth of our licence, and not merely beyond or in excess of it. This difference of language is plainly intentional, and it will certainly be allowed that the latter expression is the stronger and more decisive of the two. Here the *original statute* is the only standard of judgment, for in this decree, issued by the Government, it is only the legality of the different acts in question which is dealt with.

But Wiclif does not apply to the question this low formal standard only, but forms his judgment of the last organic change which had been made, upon its substantive merits in point of congruity with the ends contemplated by the foundation. And here his judgment is one of entire disapproval, because the newly-appointed members being already over-richly provided for, were by no means in need of the bounty of such a foundation. He has here in his eye the extensive landed possessions belonging to the Benedictine monastery of Canterbury, which was organically connected with the Archiepiscopal Cathedral, while the colleges in Oxford, as in Paris and other univer-

sities, were originally and principally intended for the support of the poorer class of students, and of masters without independent means. This language of Wiclf, however, as before remarked, is used in a purely objective sense, and by no means in such a tone as wculd warrant us to assume that the painful experiences which he had had to endure in his relations to the oft-mentioned college, may have had a determining influence upon his ecclesiastical views and work. It is only, however, a thorough exhibition of his public conduct that can throw light upon the question, whether there is any truth in the hostile allegation that the position of antagonism taken up by Wiclf against the Church, and especially against prelates and monastic orders, took its rise in injury done to his own private interests, and was thus inspired by low motives and personal revenge.

Canterbury Hall no longer exists in Oxford as an independent foundation, for after the Reformation the buildings of the hall passed over to the stately college of Christ Church, founded by Cardinal Wolsey.

Returning now to the year 1366—the limit of the period assigned to the present chapter, and which we have been led to exceed by four or six years in order to finish the topic now discussed—this year was possibly the date at which Wiclf reached the highest degree of academic dignity, that of doctor in the Theological Faculty. Since the sixteenth century it has been assumed, on the authority of a statement of Bishop Bale, that Wiclf became doctor of theology in 1372.³⁰ In assigning this date, Bale, it may be conjectured, proceeded upon the fact that in the royal ordinance of 26th July 1374, which nominated commissioners for negotiations with the Papal Court, Wiclf is introduced as *sacræ theologie professor*, at which date, there-

fore, he must have been already doctor.³¹ And here let me remark by the way, that the title of professor of theology given to Wiclif, has generally been misunderstood, as though it meant that he had been appointed to a professorial chair. But this rests upon an anachronism. The mediæval universities, down at least to the fifteenth century, knew nothing of professors in the sense of modern universities. The title *sacrae paginæ*, or *theologiæ professor*, denotes in the fourteenth century, not an university office, to be thought of in connection with particular duties and rights, and especially with a fixed stipend, but only an academic degree; for it is equivalent to the title of doctor of theology. Such an one had the full right to deliver theological lectures, but was under no special obligation to do so, nor, apart from some trifling dues as a member of the Theological Faculty, had he any salary proper, except in cases where, along with the degree, some church-living might be conferred upon him.³²

So much as this we know from the royal document just mentioned, that Wiclif was a doctor of theology in the year 1374. But it is only the latest possible date which is thus fixed; and Bale conjectured with good reason, that Wiclif must have become a doctor some considerable time before, and suggested the year 1372.³³ Shirley, on the other hand, believes that he is able to make out, with some probability, that Wiclif was promoted to this degree as early as 1363. He supports this view upon several polemical pieces of the Carmelite John Cunningham, directed against Wiclif, which he has himself published. And it is indeed worth remarking, that that monkish theologian in his first essay, as well as in the introduction to it, speaks of Wiclif exclusively under the title of *magister*, whereas in the second and third, he uses the titles *magister* and *doctor* interchangeably.³⁴ But now

the first of these essays where the latter title never once occurs, has reference to a tract of Wiclf, in which he mentions that it is not his intention to go, *for the present*, into the question of the right of property (*de dominio*);³⁵ while a fragment upon this question, which Lewis gives in his appendix to the life of Wiclf,³⁶ was probably written in 1366, and the larger work of Wiclf, *De Dominio Divino*, from which that fragment, it is likely, was taken, was written at latest in 1368. Hence Shirley believes that he may perhaps indicate the year 1363, as that in which Wiclf received his degree.

We are unable, however, to concur in this conjecture, because we have positive testimony to show that in the end of the year 1365, Wiclf was only master of arts, and not yet doctor of theology. For Archbp. Islip describes him in the document of 9th December 1365, in which he nominates him to the headship of Canterbury Hall, as *magister in artibus*, whereas³⁷ the whole connection shows that he would certainly have laid stress upon the higher academic degree, if Wiclf had already possessed it.

The fact then stands thus, that Wiclf, in 1374, was a doctor of theology, but not yet in 1365. In the intervening period between these two dates he must have taken that degree; but to fix the time with precision is impossible, for lack of documentary authority.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III.

1. *John Lewis, History, etc.*, I. 4. *Vaughan, Life and Opinions*, I. 241. *Monograph*, p. 39 f.
2. Compotus Ric. Billingham, bursarii 30 Edward III., Rot. in thesaurario Coll. Merton, as referred to by the Editors of the *Wyclif Bible*, p. 7.
3. Shirley, *Fasciculi Zizaniorum*, p. 511.
4. Lewis, *History, etc.*, p. 4.
5. Comp. Sam. Lewis, *Topographical Dictionary*, 5 ed., Lond. 1842; 4to. Abbotsley.
6. Shirley gives an exact account of these documents in notes 4 and 5 on p. XIV. of the "Introduction." [Several of them are transcribed in "Riley's Report to the Royal Commission on Historical MSS. on the Archives of Balliol College."—*Translator.*]
7. The entry in the Episcopal Register of Lincoln, Bishop Bokyngham's, 1363-1397, is as follows:—"Idibus Aprilis, anno domini millesimo CCCmo. LXVIII. apud parkum Stowe concessa fuit licentia magistro Johanni de Wyclere, rectori ecclesiae de Fylingham, quod posset se absentare ab ecclesia sua insistendo literarum studio in Universitate Oxon. per biennium."
8. The remarks made by Buddensieg in opposition to this view (*Zeitschrift für Historische Theologie*, 1874, p. 316) rest upon what I consider to be an erroneous interpretation of the entries in the account-books of Queen's College, communicated by Shirley in the "Fasciculi," p. 514; for these entries manifestly refer, not to short stays in the college rooms, but to rents of rooms paid by the year, with which sense alone agrees the recurring mention of Wyclif's *camera*. In a passage of his paper further on, Buddensieg himself understands all the entries in question of a two years' rental.
9. Lewis *History*, Appendix No. 3, p. 290.
10. The substance of the article is given in the appendix to Townsend's edition of Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, III. 812, and in the appendix to Vaughan's *Monograph*, p. 547 f. In the latter, however, the year 1844 is printed by mistake for 1841.
11. "Ad vitæ tuæ et conversationis laudabilis honestatem, literarumque scientiam, quibus personam tuam in artibus magistratam Altissimus insignivit, mentis nostræ oculos dirigentes, ac de tuis fidelitate, circumspectione et industria plurimum confidentes in custodem Aulæ nostræ Cantuar—te Praefecimus," etc.—*Wood's History and Antiquities, Oxon.*, I. p. 184; *Lewis History, etc.*, p. 290.
12. In a long Excursus to his edition of the *Fasciculi Zizaniorum*, p. 513-528.

13. Wiclif calls him *Doctor meus Reverendus Mr. Willielmus Wodford* in his work *De Civili Dominio*, iii. c. 18, Vienna MSS., 1340, fol. 141, col. 2. He says of him—"Arguit contra hoc compendioso et subtiliter more suo. Et revera obligacion et amplius huic doctori meo, quo in diversis gradibus et actibus scolasticis didici ex ejus exercitatione modesta multas mihi notabiles veritates."

14. Of this writing, which has never been printed—*Septuaginta duo Quæstiones de Sacramento altaris*—there is preserved a MS. in the Bodleian, No. 703. Harl. 31, fol. 31. Under Quæstio 50 the author speaks of the polemic of Wiclif against the monks in the following style:—"Et hæc contra religiosos insanias generata est ex corruptione. Nam priusquam per religiosos possessionatos et prælatos expulsus fuerat de aula Monachorum Cantuariae, nihil contra possessionatos attemptavit quod esset alicujus ponderis. Et prius quam per religiosos Mendicantes reprobatus fuit publice de heresibus in sacramento altaris, nihil contra eos attemptavit, sed posterius multipliciter eos diffamavit; ita quod doctrinæ suae malæ et infestæ contra religiosos et possessionatos et Mendicantes generatae fuerunt ex putrefactionibus et melancoliis."—*Shirley*, p. 517 f.

14. *Shirley*, as above.

15. Shirley was the first to call attention to this passage, and he has given it, though not at full length, in the "Note on the two John Wiclifs," at the end of the *Fasciculi*, p. 526. I had found the passage before I observed that he had already given an extract from it. But I found it necessary to reproduce the context with somewhat greater fulness. *Vide Appendix III.*

16. The words *in familiariori exemplo* cannot be understood in any other sense. The *comparative* here points back to the preceding *positive, familiare inconveniens*. Opponents had pointed to the endowments of the University and its colleges as matters nearly affecting Wiclif's interest, but Wiclif replies by pointing to something which touched his personal interest more nearly and more directly still; and it is this comparative *familiariori exemplo*—not Shirley's reading of the MS. *familiari*—which is of decisive importance for our inquiry.

17. Wiclif here no doubt alludes, in addition to the estate of Woodford, to the church of "Pageham" (Pagham in Sussex, on the coast of the Channel) which the archbishop had incorporated with the foundation of his hall, as appears from several documents which have come down to us. (*Vide Lewis*, pp. 285, 293. Shirley is right in referring the alleged sin of Archbishop Islip to this act of incorporation, whereas Dr. Vaughan, in an article in the *British Quarterly Review*, October 1858, erroneously refers Wiclif's censure to the circumstance that the Primate had, in the first instance, introduced into his foundation both monks and seculars.

18. Robert Lowth, *Life of William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester*, 1758, pp. 93, 176 f.

19. The identity of our Wiclif with the warden of Canterbury Hall is indirectly confirmed by the circumstance that Benger, Middleworth, and Selby, who were members of the hall under John Wiclif, 1365-66, had previously been members of Merton College, like Wiclif himself, and were afterwards, with the exception of Benger, members of Queen's College, with which Wiclif also, as is

well known, stood in a certain connection.—*Vide Buddensieg; Zeitschrift, &c.,* as above p. 336.

20. We learn that this was the representation of the case made in the complaint addressed by Wiclif's opponents to the Papal See, from the mandate of Urban V. of 11th May 1370, by which the process was decided.—*Vide Lewis, p. 292 f,* for the documents.

21. *Aula (Cantuariensis) in qua certus erit numerus scholarium tam religiosorum quam secularium, etc.*—No 1 in Lewis, p. 285; No. 8, p. 297, 301.

22. *Prater licentiam nostram supradictam. Contra formam licentiae nostre supradictæ.*—Lewis, pp. 298, 299.

23. *De gratia nostra speciali, et pro ducentis marcis quas dicti prior et conventus nobis solverunt in hanaperio nostro, perdonarimus omnes transgressiones factas, etc.*—Lewis, p. 229.

24. *Quam (aulam) pro duodenario studentium numero duximus ordinandam.*

25. *Juxta formam et effectum ordinationis vestræ factæ in hac parte.*—Lewis, 287, No. 2.

26. Lewis, No. 4, p. 290.

27. The latter was maintained by Wiclif's opponents in their representation to the Curia; but that the matter was not placed beyond doubt is plain from the language of the deed, which intentionally left it indeterminate.

28. *Falsa asserentes, dictum collegium per clericos seculares regi debere, dictum Johannem fore custodem collegii supradicti. Monachos de ipso collegio excluserunt.*—Lewis, No. 7, p. 292.

29. Amotis omnino per prædictum archiepiscopum—Custode et cæteris Monachis scolaribus—ab aula prædicta, idem archiepiscopus quendam scolarem (secularem?) custodem dictæ Aulæ, ac caeteros omnes scolares in eadem seculares (so to be read instead of *scolares*) duntaxat constituerit, etc.—Lewis, No. 8, p. 298.

30. Lewis, No. 6, p. 292. An extract from a document of the archiepiscopal archives.

31. Decrevit et declaravit solos Monachos prædictæ ecclesiæ Cant. secularibus exclusis, debere in dicto collegio perpetuo remanere.—Lewis, No. 7, p. 295.

32. So Vaughan in his latest work on Wiclif, the *Monograph*, p. 138.

33. Lewis, in Appendix No. 11, p. 304.

34. Comp. Thurot *De l'Organisation de l'Enseignement dans l'Université de Paris au moyen Age*, p. 158.

35. Shirley, *Fasciculi*, &c., pp. 4, 14, 48, particularly pp. 73 f and 88 f. Comp. Introduction, p. xvi.

36. Do. p. 453.

37. Do. p. 456.

38. Lewis, No. 30, p. 349.

39. Lewis, No. 3, p. 290. Personam tuam in artibus magistratam,—so it should be read with Anthony Wood, not *magistratum*, as Lewis has it.

ADDITIONAL NOTES TO CHAPTER III., BY THE TRANSLATOR.

*I don't love Frances just as much
as Frances dont love me.*

NOTE I.—WICLIF'S CONNECTION WITH BALLIOL COLLEGE.

On looking recently into the *Registrum Palatinum Dunelmense*, issued in 1873, under the editorship of Sir Thomas Hardy, Deputy Keeper of the Public Records, my attention was attracted by a document (Vol. III., p. 381) entitled "Appropriation of the Church of Miklebenton to the Master and Scholars of Balliol Hall in Oxford, by Philip de Somerville, and Statutes for the Regulation of six new Fellows of the said Hall, A.D. 1340." The date being nearly coincident with that at which Wiclif must have begun his college career in Oxford, and his mastership of Balliol only twenty years later being a matter of indisputable record, it at once occurred to me that the document might possibly have some collateral bearing on the question of Wiclif's connection with Balliol at an earlier stage than his Mastership. Nor was I disappointed in this surmise. I found, on a careful perusal, that this deed of Sir Philip de Sounerville supplied some links which had hitherto been missing from the reasonings of Wiclif's biographers on the interesting question of the place and the course of his earliest studies in the University.

There are two copies of this deed given in the *Registrum*, the one forming part of the Register itself, the other printed in the Appendix from the *original* preserved among the archives of Balliol College. The editor printed the latter "because in many instances it appears more correct than the transcript in the Register, and gives clauses which are there omitted. In some cases, however, the last-named MS. contains what are apparently better readings." The original deed is signed and sealed by the Bishop of Durham (Richard de Bury), at Aukland, 18th October 1340; by the Prior and Convent of Durham, 24th October 1340; by the Chancellor of the University of Oxford on the day after the Purification of the Blessed Virgin, 1340; and by the Master and scholars of Balliol on the same day.

On turning next to the Histories of the University and its colleges, by Anthony Wood, and his predecessor Brian Twyne, and to the work entitled "Ballio-Fergus," a Commentary upon *the foundation, founders, and affairs of Balliol College*, by Henry Savage, Master of Balliol, published in 1668, I found not only that Sir Philip de Somerville's Statutes had been in print for two centuries, but that a good many other facts in the annals of Balliol and the University were equally available as side lights for the elucidation of Wiclif's early University career; not indeed to the extent of determining anything connected with it with absolute certainty, for which we have not the attestation of express record, but to the effect of making it appear that there is a high degree of probability that instead of having ever been connected at any period of his University life, prior to his mastership of Balliol, either as a commoner with Queen's, or as a Postmaster or Fellow with Merton, he was all along a Balliol man, from his first coming up to Oxford in 1335 (taking Lechler's approximate date) to his election to the mastership of his college.

In bringing together the materials of our argument, we begin with the date of Wiclif's mastership, which has recently been ascertained to have been as early at

least as A.D. 1360. The year usually assigned hitherto was 1361, but Mr. Riley, in his recent "Report to the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts," 1874, states that Wiclif's name and style as "Master of the Hall called Le Baillo halle in Oxford" occurs in a Latin memorandum, existing among the College archives, having reference to a suit brought against the college in the matter of some house property belonging to it in the parish of St. Lawrence, Jewry, London, in the 34th year of the reign of King Edward the Third—*i.e.*, A.D. 1360.

No man, however, could be elected Master of Balliol unless he was at the time one of the Fellows; for it was one of the fundamental statutes of the house that the Fellows should always choose the Principal or Master *from their own number*.

The statute stands thus in the original statutes of Devorguilla, A.D. 1282:—
"Volumus quoad scholares nostri ex semetipsis eligant unum principalem cui ceteri omnes humiliter obedient in his quae officium principalis contingent, secundum statuta et consuetudines inter ipsos usitatas et approbatas."

Nor was this fundamental statute afterwards changed by any of the additional or altered statutes which were successively introduced. The statutes of Sir Philip de Somerville, which were added in 1340 to those of Devorguilla, contained a provision "that nothing was to be done under the former contrary to the provisions of the latter." Though nothing therefore is said in these new statutes to the effect of restricting the choice of the Fellows in the election of the Master to their own number, the very reason of this omission was that this provision had been clearly laid down in the fundamental statutes. And it is a strong confirmation of the fact that the original principle of election was not departed from under Sir Philip's new statutes, that when the statutes were revised in 1364 by the Bishop of London, the provision for the election of Master remained still the same—"Qui *de se ipsis* habeant unum magistrum;" and again in 1433, when a further modification of the statutes was made by the authority of another Bishop of London—the same restrictive words were continued in force—"Qui *de se ipsis* habeant unum magistrum."

Wiclif, then, was unquestionably a Fellow of Balliol before he was elected Master, and if a Fellow or Postmaster of Merton of the same name had not appeared upon the records of that college in the year 1356, who has for centuries been identified with the master of Balliol, the inference from the fact of his having held a Balliol Fellowship, would have been natural and easy, that he had all along from the first been a member of that House, up to the date of his election to the Mastership. But in view of that Merton record, such an inference is attended with great difficulty, to surmount which we must either adopt the opinion of the late Professor Shirley, that John Wiclif of Balliol was a different man from John Wiclif of Merton; or if we still hold them to be the same, we must conclude that as Wiclif the Reformer was a Fellow of both houses, he must either have surrendered his Fellowship of Balliol to go to Merton, or have been elected for the first time a Fellow of Balliol when he ceased, some time before his election to the Mastership of the latter, to be a Fellow or Postmaster of Merton.

To enable us to choose between these alternatives of two different Wiclfis and one only, there are several important facts available, touching the relations of these two colleges to one another, and touching the financial conditions of Balliol College in particular, which, so far as we know, have never yet been brought into

view in connection with the question of Wiclif's relation to either or both of these ancient seats of learning.

If it be supposed that Wiclif could pass easily during the first twenty years of his university life in Oxford, from Balliol to Merton, and from Merton to Balliol, or could be in official connection with both at the same time, no supposition could be more contrary to all probability, in view of the actual and well-ascertained relations of these two colleges at that very time. These two houses were the headquarters of the two great antagonistic *factions* of the University during the fourteenth century. Both the chief historians of Oxford, Brian Twyne and Anthony Wood, give us ample and graphic information of these rival parties of the *Boreales* and the *Australes*—the north countrymen and the south countrymen of the University; and if Merton stands out prominently in their accounts as the centre and head of the faction of the south, it is not difficult to discover that Balliol was the chief focus of the faction of the north.

To what a pitch of violence the contests of these factions had reached in 1334—the year preceding that on which Wiclif is conjectured by Professor Lechler to have come up to Oxford, will appear from the following passage of Wood's *History and Antiquities of the University of Oxford*, vol. i., p. 425.

"This year several students of the University, as well as masters, bachelors and scholars, did, under colour of some discord among them, and upon some pretences sought after, depart hence to Stamford in Lincolnshire, and there began or rather renewed or continued an academy in the months (it should seem) of May, June, and July. Camden and Mr. Twyne say that that university, or rather school of Stamford, began from a discord that happened between the northern and southern clerks of Oxford, the first of which having the worst, retired to the said place and began there to profess letters; yet when this controversy began they tell us not. That such controversies between the northern and southern men have often happened, is evidently apparent from what is before delivered; and that also they were now on foot, I doubt it not, *forasmuch as the members of Merton College refused, at this time and before, to elect northern scholars into their society, because they and the University should be at peace; as from several complaints of the church of Durham against the Mertonians, is apparent.*"

The sources which Wood here refers to are *Registrum diversarum Epistolarum de officio Canc. Monachorum Eccl. Dunelmensis*, fol. 18 et 48. "Et in quodam parvo Registro in Cesta *Œconomia in Scacc. Coll. Mert.*, p. 19." I had hoped to find these ancient epistles among the extant archives of Merton College, but a recent visit to the strong vaulted chamber in which these are deposited, with all the hearty aid of the college bursar, Mr. Edwardes, failed to bring the documents to light. Nor do they appear to have met the practised eye of Mr. Riley, when he drew up his recent report upon the Merton papers.

This secession from the University continued till 1336—when the opposition schools at Stamford were forcibly suppressed by the authority of the King and the secessionists were under the necessity of returning, no doubt with the worst grace, to Oxford. Who can doubt that the passionate grudges engendered by such a high quarrel, must have continued to embitter the life of the University for many years to come, and that the north countrymen in particular must long have cherished resentful memories of a struggle which had been marked on their side by

such violent contrasts of proud disdain and ignominious submission. And this was the state of feeling which Wiclit found to exist in the University in the earliest years of his membership -a feeling with which, as a *Borealis* himself, he could scarcely fail to sympathise. Under date, A.D. 1343, Wood has the following entry:—“Clashing controversies.”

But it was in the year 1349, when Wiclit had been probably fourteen years in Oxford, that the southern faction, headed and organised by the Merton men, reached the climax of violence and outrage. “But no sooner,” says Wood, “was that quarrel (among the junior scholars) finished, but another happened among the masters concerning corrupt elections made about the office of Chancellor the last year. Mr. John Willyot, lately Fellow of Merton College, was designed to that office by the generality, but some discovering an opposition caused all the quarrel, and at length divided the University into parties; for while Mr. Willyot and his men were plotting and contriving to bring their designs to pass, his antagonist would do the like, and take all advantages to draw off, or at least lessen his party. The said factions continuing to the beginning of the year, Willyot’s party about the end of March entered rudely into St. Mary’s Church, at the time when the Chancellor was to be elected, and there with clamour and shoutings cried him up to be their Chancellor, and on those that did oppose them they laid violent hands, beat, kicked about, and cudgelled, till some were severely wounded and others in a manner killed. At length after much ado, Willyot’s party had the better, installed him, and put the fasces of authority into his hand, and caused Robert Ingram, the northern proctor, who was a great opposer of Willyot’s party, to be banished Oxford. In this riot one of the University chests was broken open, and the common seal, with money, books, and certain chattels therein, were taken away, and divers insolences relating to other matters committed. These things being done, the particulars came to the King’s knowledge, who forthwith sent his letters, dated 2nd April, to Mr. John Willyot, Philip Codeford, William Hayes or Hues, Robert de Wotton, Richard de Bellyngham, Michael Kyllegrew, John Banbury, Richard Wanwayne, and Richard de Swyngeshead, the chief leaders of the said riotous election, and most of them, as also those before-mentioned, Merton College men, that they should under pain of forfeiting all that they have or enjoy, restore the said seal and goods and other things taken away into the proctor’s hands, to be by them put in their usual place, and to have the chest sealed up as it was before.

“At the same time also, another command was sent to the said Mr. Willyot, denoting that whereas he and his accomplices had proceeded against the customs and statutes of the University in their late election of Chancellor, and had banished one of the proctors with other persons, and had imprisoned divers, that he forthwith upon the sight thereof cause them to be recalled and restored to their liberty, to let them rest quietly without the disturbance of any person in the University; and withal that neither he nor any of his party hold any meetings, conventicles, congregations, etc., to the disturbance of the peace, under forfeiture of all that they were worth. Not long after, several commissioners were sent to Oxon. to examine or make search into the said riot, and after they had so done, were to settle a right understanding between the said parties. But in their proceedings, finding much wrong to have been committed, they punished divers persons, and would have removed

Mr. Willyot from his place had they not feared the scholars, whom they saw ready (notwithstanding the King's letters for the conservation of the peace) to vindicate their late actions. So unanimous were they to defend what they had done, either by argument or blow, that rather than their man should be put by, they would venture their greatest strength, and if that would not do, then they were resolved to relinquish the University and settle themselves elsewhere to study, and so by that means draw all the southern men after them."

Such was the state of University factions in 1349. Merton was one of the two *foci* of faction, and no doubt Balliol was the other, as a north country college drawing most of its men and revenues from the country north of the Humber. By recent additions to its revenues and the number of its members, its Master and Fellows were now on a footing of full equality with those of Merton in point of income and social standing, and would be regarded as the natural leaders of all the *Boreales* of the University, including the Provost and Fellows of Queen's College, then newly founded and not yet very rich. Wiclf in 1349 was one of its twenty-two Fellows, and for fourteen or fifteen years had doubtless been an energetic sharer in all the intellectual and social excitement of the academic life. Is it likely, then, that a Fellowship at Merton could ever have been an object of ambition to a Balliol man like him? Or if it could have been so, is it in the least probable that the Merton men would have been disposed to gratify him in that point? Only a few years before, as we have already seen, the Merton authorities had been systematically excluding north-country men, and had drawn upon themselves the remonstrances of the powerful Monastery of Durham; and the offence taken at Durham must have been felt even more strongly in Durham College in Oxford, which was a branch house recently founded of the great Benedictine Monastery of the north, and with which Balliol had been brought into a close administrative connection by the Somerville Statutes. These two Colleges were no doubt as closely united in feeling against Merton and its proceedings as they now were by statutory ties. It is in the highest degree improbable, therefore, that Wiclf, if already a Fellow of Balliol, would have sought to exchange that position for a Postmastership of Merton; or that the Fellows of Merton would have admitted him to the membership of their society. And it is quite incredible that if he had left his own college to go to Merton, which could not have failed, at a time when party feeling ran so high, to be condemned as an act of treachery to his party, the Fellows of Balliol would, a few years afterwards, have elected him to their Mastership—the highest post of honour which they had to bestow.

To explain what is meant by the administrative connection between Balliol and Durham College just now referred to, let me add here, as briefly as possible, that the Somerville Statutes provided that the Prior or Warden of Durham College, set over it by the Prior of the Monastery of Durham, should have an effective voice in the confirmation of the election or removal of the Master of Balliol; and also in the confirmation of all Fellows who were elected to the Theological Fellowships, founded under those statutes, who must always be presented to him after their election, to be by him either confirmed or rejected as he might see cause. What influences led to this singular statutory tie between Balliol and the Durham monks in Oxford I do not find anywhere stated, but it is a curious subject of inquiry. The Durham College was a royal foundation of Edward III., the fulfilment of a vow made to

the Virgin on the eve of his battle with the Scots at Homildon Hill, near Berwick ; and in the execution of his design he probably acted under the advice of Richard de Bury, Bishop of Durham, and Chancellor of the kingdom, who had been his tutor ; and this advice had no doubt the aim of strengthening the interest of north-country scholars in the University. “ Durham College ” was one of the youngest institutions of the University, and it was apparently judged to be a good way of giving it prestige to bring it into a vital connection with one of the oldest ; and the consent of Balliol to such an arrangement, so unusual and so open to objection, is, on the face of it, a strong proof of the zeal of that ancient house for the north-country interest, and a collateral confirmation of its claim to be regarded as the head-quarters of that interest in the University.

The financial conditions of Balliol, at the period of Wiclif's connection with it, are equally unfavourable to the notion that he ever left it to go to Merton. Precisely at this period its revenues had been brought into a condition of comparative ease and affluence by two benefactions from Sir William Fenton and Sir Philip de Somerville. The year 1341 was the date of both of these, and whether Wiclif came up to the University in 1340 or in 1335, he entered at Balliol just in time to be helped in the long progress of his studies in Arts and Theology by these new endowments. Till these additional revenues accrued, the scholars or fellows of the college were limited to sixteen in number, receiving a weekly allowance which was inadequate, and were obliged to leave the house as soon as they had taken their Master's degree ; and no provision existed to aid them in prosecuting their studies in the Theological Faculty. But the new joint-endowments brought up the number of Fellows to twenty-two, increased the weekly allowances by an addition of one-half more, and provided for the support of six Theological Fellows chosen out of the twenty-two, who were to continue in residence till they took the degree of Bachelor in Theology. These ample provisions made it quite unnecessary for any Balliol man “ of mark and likelihood ” to remove to any other college of the University in order to obtain the means of prosecuting his studies. The Merton men themselves were in no respect better off. When Professor Lechler suggested that Wiclif may have exchanged Balliol for Merton on account of the stringency of the fundamental statute of Devorguilla, which required men to leave the house on their taking their Master's degree, he wrote under the impression that Sir William Felton's benefaction did not become available till 1361, whereas it accrued in fact in 1341 ; and he was not aware of the benefactions and the accompanying statutes of Sir Philip de Somerville of the same year. These new statutes, intended to regulate the administration of the increased revenues of the college, were a windfall for Wiclif and other young theologues of the favoured house. Balliol from that red-letter year became a nursery not only of Arts but of Scholastic Theology ; and we no longer need to doubt that it was under the hospitable college roof of the Lord and Lady Balliol of Barnard Castle that the great Reformer grew up, during a long residence of a quarter of a century, to be one of the most consummate philosophers and divines of his nation and age.

Full details in regard to both these benefactions and their accompanying statutes will be found in Henry Savage's *Balliofergus*, Oxford 1668 ; and in Anthony Wood's *History and Antiquities of the Colleges and Halls in the University of Oxford*, Oxford 1786.

NOTE II.—IDENTITY OF JOHN WICLIF THE REFORMER WITH JOHN WICLIF THE WARDEN OF CANTERBURY HALL.

Dr. Lechler has omitted to bring forward a material argument in support of the identity of Wiclif with the Warden of Canterbury Hall, which is supplied by one of the original chronicles of the period, an omission which may have been owing to the discredit thrown upon the authority of the chronicle by Professor Shirley in his *Note on the Two John Wiclfis*, appended to the *Fasc. Zizaniorum*. This omission can now be supplied with more effect than it could have been four years ago, owing to the recent discovery of the original Latin Chronicle, the contents of which were only partially known before from the fragment of an old English translation of it made in the 16th century, which was published in the *Archaeologia*, xxii., p. 253.

This Chronicle has recently been given to the world in the series of *Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland during the Middle Ages*, brought out under the direction of the Master of the Rolls, under the following title: *Chronicon Angliae, ab anno domini 1328, usque ad annum 1388; Auctore Monacho quodam Sancti Albani*. Edited by Edward Maunde Thompson, Assistant Keeper of the MSS. of the British Museum, 1874.

It is printed from a MS. of the Harleian Collection, No. 3634, written on vellum towards the close of the fourteenth century, which has hitherto escaped the notice of historians. The MS. once belonged to Archbishop Parker, and was lent by him to Foxe, the martyrologist, who several times refers to it under the title of "Chronicon Monachi D. Albani." In one place his reference is in this form, "Ex Historia Monachi D. Albani, ex accommodato D. Matth. Archiepis. Cant." John Josceline, the archbishop's secretary, in his "Catalogus Historiorum" described it thus: "In ea multa continentur de Wicliffe, Papali Schismate et de magna Rusticorum rebellione, quæ facta fuit per id tempus." "It contains," says its discoverer and editor, Mr. Thompson, "an important detailed history of the close of Edward Third's and the beginning of Richard Second's reign, which is now printed in its original shape for the first time, and which has hitherto been considered lost. The former existence of a Latin original for the translation used by John Stow in his Chronicle of England [the same translation printed in the *Archaeologia*] has been generally admitted by historians. The only writer who has thrown any doubts upon it is the late Professor Shirley, in his edition of the *Fasciculi Zizaniorum*. The translation being one of the authorities brought forward in support of a tradition that Wiclif held the Wardenship of Canterbury Hall at Oxford, Mr. Shirley rejects its testimony on the ground of its being a compilation of the sixteenth century, while admitting, however, that the author had before him one, or perhaps two, contemporary authorities which he has indolently interwoven with his narrative, without changing one even of those expressions which most clearly reflect the image of passing events." All this criticism is, of course, superseded by the facts that we have now before us the original Latin text of the *Chronicon Angliae* in a MS. dating from the last quarter of the fourteenth century; and that this was indisputably the work of a cotemporary

historian. What, then, is the testimony of this cotemporary of Wiclf, who evidently shared largely in all the ecclesiastical passions and prejudices of his time, upon the point of the Reformer's connection with Canterbury Hall? It is contained in the following passage of his *Chronicon* :—

“Dux (referring to John, Duke of Gaunt) aggregaverat sibi quendam pseudotheologum, sive, ut melius eum nominem, verum theomachum, qui jam a multis annis in scholis, in singulis actis suis contra ecclesiam oblatraverat, eo quod juste privatus extiterat per archiepiscopum Cantuariensem quodam beneficio, cui injuste incubuerat in Universitate Oxoniensi situato.” The words of the translation, published in the *Archaeologia* are, that “he was justly deprived by the Archbischopp of Canterbury from a certayne benefice that he unjustly was incumbent upon within the cytye of Oxford.”

The incident, then, in question, in the life of Wiclf, viz., his short Wardenship of Canterbury Hall, may now be considered to be put beyond the range of reasonable doubt. Shirley admitted that “great weight must undoubtedly be allowed to the cotemporary statement of Woodford;” to which has now to be added a second cotemporary statement by the Monk of St. Alban's, as it now stands before us cleared of all the doubts which were thrown upon it by the acute and learned editor of the *Fasciculi Zizaniorum*.

NOTE III.—THE WICLIF-RESEARCHES OF THE LATE PREBENDARY WILKINSON.

Some portion of the fruits of the researches of the late Prebendary Wilkinson has recently appeared in *The Church Quarterly Review*, No. 9. This portion relates entirely to the connections of Wiclf with the Oxford Colleges, and his able criticism is chiefly directed against Professor Shirley's views on the same subject. He agrees with Dr. Lechler in maintaining the identity of the Reformer not only with John Wiclf, Warden of Canterbury Hall, but also with John Wiclf, Fellow or Postmaster of Merton. In his investigation of the latter point none of the facts brought together above (Additional Note I.) appear to have fallen under his notice. He is much more successful in his argumentation on the question of the Reformer's Wardenship of Canterbury Hall, and he claims, upon good grounds, “to have established that Dean Hook was premature in regarding the question as conclusively settled in the negative by Professor Shirley's arguments.”

CHAPTER IV.

WICLIF'S FIRST PUBLIC APPEARANCE IN THE ECCLESIASTICO-POLITICAL AFFAIRS OF ENGLAND.

SECTION I.—*Wiclif as a Patriot.*

AFTER having followed with attention the course of Wiclif's purely academic career up to the present point, we can only be astonished to behold him all at once appearing upon the stage of public life. Hitherto we have known him only as a man of science—as a quiet scholar. From his youth up to the most vigorous years of manhood, he had only seldom left, so far as we can see, the precincts of the university-city of Oxford. He seems even to have visited but rarely his parish of Fillingham, to which he had been presented in 1361, and on each occasion only for a short time. We know in fact that he obtained a dispensation from his bishop to enable him to remain at the University, and devote himself without interruption to science.

It is true that as Fellow and Seneschal of Merton College, as Master of Balliol, and as Warden of Canterbury Hall, he had had practical problems of many kinds to solve, and been occupied much with business of an economic, legal, and administrative description. The judgment of his patron in high place, Archbishop Islip, when he entrusted him with the government of Canterbury Hall, is assurance to us that Wiclif had already, both in Merton and Balliol, proved himself to be a man of practical talent, and upright, circumspect, and energetic in matters of business. Still, all this activity had been put forth within a narrow circle, and one

which was more or less closely connected with properly scientific life. But now we see the scholar step out from the quiet spaces of the University to take part in public affairs. For it was not merely that Wiclif began to manifest his interest in the affairs of the kingdom in a Christian and literary way, which he might possibly have done without leaving his own chamber in the cloister-like buildings of his college; but he came personally forward to take an active part in the public business of Church and State. This change of position comes upon us with surprise; but yet we are not to imagine that Wiclif has become an altered man; rather must we say to ourselves that we only now come in view of what has hitherto been an unobserved side of his nature. For Wiclif was a many-sided mind; a man of high mark, who not only felt powerfully all that moved, on many different sides, his own people and times, but who, in some things, was far in advance of his age—a prophet and type of what was still in the future. And it is only when we bring into view, without abridgement, all that he united in himself, when we sharply distinguish the manifold sides of his nature, and again take them together in their innermost unity, that we shall be able to draw a true and faithful picture of his powerful personality.

At this moment it is Wiclif the patriot whom we have to place before the eye. He represents in his own person that intensification of English national feeling which was so conspicuous in the fourteenth century, when, as we have seen above, Crown and people, Norman population and Saxon, formed a compact unity, and energetically defended the autonomy, the rights and the interests of the kingdom in its external relations, and especially in opposition to the Court of Rome. This spirit lives in Wiclif with extra-

ordinary force. His great works, still unprinted, *e.g.*, the three books *De Civilis Dominio*, his work *De Ecclesia*, and others, leave upon the reader the strongest impression of a warm patriotism—of a heart glowing with zeal for the dignity of the Crown, for the honour and weal of his native land, for the rights and the constitutional liberty of the people. How often in reading his works do we come upon passages in which he recalls the memories of English history! The different invasions of the country by “Britons, Saxons, and Normans,” all stand before his mind’s eye; (the Danes alone seem to be already forgotten). St. Augustine, the “Apostle of the English,” as he calls him in one place, he mentions repeatedly, as well in learned writings as in sermons; he frequently touches upon the later Archbishops of Canterbury, especially Thomas à Becket; of kings too, as Edward the Confessor and John, he speaks ever and anon; he refers to *Magna Charta* with distinguished consideration as the fundamental law of the kingdom, binding equally king and nobles. That Wiclf had made the law of England the subject of special study, in addition to canon and Roman law, has been known since the days of Lewis, and we have come upon several confirmations of this fact. In the same context where *Magna Charta* is held up to view, Wiclf brings forward *Statutes of Westminster* and *Statutes of Gloucester*; at another time he contrasts, in connection with a particular question, the Roman law (*lex Quirina*), and the English law (*lex Anglicana*), and he gives his preference to the latter.² But so far from taking merely a learned interest in these subjects, and showing only a historical knowledge of them, he manifests the most immediate concern in the present condition of the nation, and a primary care for its welfare, its liberties, and

its honour. It is not meant that, on this account, he limited his intellectual horizon to the national interests of his own island people. On the contrary, he has all Christendom, and indeed the whole human race, in his eye; but his cosmopolitanism has a solid and ripe patriotism for its sound and vigorous kernel.

It is not wonderful that such a man—a Churchman and highly regarded scholar on the one hand, and a thorough patriot on the other—rich in knowledge, full of insight, and inspired with zeal for the public good—should have been drawn into the career of the statesman and the diplomatist. Yet he never lost himself in purely political affairs; it was only on questions and on measures of a mixed ecclesiastical and political kind that he gave his co-operation; and in the end his whole undivided strength was concentrated upon the ecclesiastical domain.

But before we follow him into public life, it is necessary to set aside an impression which has hitherto almost universally prevailed. As early as the sixteenth century the literary historians, John Leland and John Bale, put forward the view—which, in the eighteenth, Lewis fully developed in his *History*, and which is still, in substance, maintained by Vaughan himself—that Wiclif commenced his exertions for a reform of the Church with attacks upon the monastic system, especially upon the Mendicant Orders.

The view which is commonly taken is the following:—As early as the year 1360, immediately after the death of the celebrated Archbishop of Armagh, Richard Fitzralph, Wiclif opened an attack in Oxford upon the Dominican and Franciscan Orders, the Augustinians and the Carmelites, on the ground of their fundamental principle of living upon the free-will alms of the people. Indeed, it has even been

thought that when Richard of Armagh died, his mantle descended upon Wiclif, by whom his work was immediately taken up and carried farther. Critical investigation, however, is unable to find any confirmation of this common opinion.

Vaughan, in 1831, had followed Anthony Wood in the confident statement that Wiclif publicly censured the errors and failings of the Mendicant Orders as early as 1360, and became the object of their hostility in consequence.³ But in his later work, as the fruit of more careful investigation of the subject, he is no longer able to arrive at the same confident result upon the point. He remarks, with truth, that there is no direct evidence to show that Wiclif began that controversy at the precise date which he had previously assigned. But he continued to the last, notwithstanding, to be of opinion that Wiclif began his work as a Reformer with attacks upon the Monastic, and especially upon the Mendicant Orders; he believed, besides, that while the exact date at which Wiclif began the controversy could not be ascertained, it must yet be fixed at a period not much later than 1360.⁴ But on this subject we are unable to agree with him, not only because we are not aware, like himself, of any direct and decisive proof that Wiclif began his attacks upon the monks even in the years next following 1360, but because, on the contrary, we have in our hands direct proofs that Wiclif continued to speak of the begging Orders with all respectful recognition during the twenty years which elapsed between 1360 and 1380. We content ourselves in this place with stating, in anticipation, so much as this, that the reading of the unpublished writings of Wiclif, among others, yields the most weighty confirmation to the statement of his op-

ponent, Woodford, that it was in connection with the controversy opened by Wiclif on the subject of Transubstantiation, and therefore after 1381 at the earliest, that he began to oppose himself, on principle, to the Mendicants, who had come forward as his antagonists on that fundamental question.⁵ But to this point we shall return in the sequel, and we leave it in the meanwhile, to fix our attention upon the part which Wiclif took in the public affairs of England in Church and State.*

SECTION II.—*Wiclif's concern in the Rejection of the Papal Claim to Feudatory Tribute.*

IN the year 1365, Pope Urban V. had renewed his claim upon Edward III. for the annual payment of one thousand marks, in name of *Feudatory Tribute*; he had even demanded the payment of arrears extending over a period of no less than thirty-three years. For so long a time had the payment of the tribute been discontinued, without the Papal Court having ever till now made any remonstrance upon the subject. In case, however, the King should decline to comply with this demand, he was invited to present himself in person before the Pope as his feudal superior, to answer for his proceeding. The payment in question was imposed in 1213, as we before saw, by Innocent III. upon King John, for himself and his successors, but in point of fact it had been paid from the first with the greatest irregularity, and King Edward III., from the time of reaching his majority, had never allowed it, as a matter of principle, to be paid at all. When Urban reminded him of the payment, this prince acted with the greatest possible

* See Additional Note at the end of the Chapter.

prudence; he laid the question before his Parliament. He had often enough been obliged, in order to meet the cost of wars, to ask Parliament to consent to increased burdens of taxation; and all the more acceptable to him was the opportunity of giving into the hands of the representatives of the country the repudiation of an impost which had been in abeyance for more than a generation. Should Parliament adopt this resolution, the Crown was covered by the country. But the burden of taxation was not the principal point of view from which the Parliament looked at the Papal demand; much more than that, the honour and independence of the kingdom was the determining consideration for its representatives; and this all the more, that, on the one hand, the war with France, and the victories obtained in it, had given a powerful stimulus to the national spirit, while, on the other hand, the political rights and liberties of the people had been heightened and secured in equal proportion to the sacrifices which they had been called to make of property and blood.

The Parliament assembled in May 1366, and the King immediately laid before it the Papal demand, for its opinion. As may well be conceived, the prelates were the party who were placed in the greatest difficulty by this question, and they begged therefore a day's time for consideration and counsel by themselves alone. But on the following day they had already agreed upon a conclusion, and they were of one mind with the rest of the estates. Thus the Lords spiritual and temporal, along with the Commons, arrived at an unanimous decision to the effect that King John had acted entirely beyond his right in subjecting his country and people to such a feudal superiority without their own consent, and besides that this whole com-

pact was a violation of his coronation oath. Further, the Lords and Commons declared that in case the Pope should carry out his threatened procedure against the King, they would place the whole powers and resources of the nation at the disposal of the King for the defence of his crown and dignity. This language was intelligible; Urban quickly gave in; and since that day in fact, not one word more has ever been said on the part of Rome of her feudal superiority over England, to say nothing of a payment of feudal tribute.

In this national affair of the highest importance Wiclif also bore a part. That this was the case has long been known, but in what form or way he took his share in it has been less clear down to the present time. Since Lewis wrote his "History" of the Reformer, it has been known that Wiclif published a polemical tract upon that question of political right, entirely in the sense of the Declaration of Parliament; and that he did so in consequence of a sort of challenge which had been addressed to him by name by an anonymous Doctor of Theology, belonging to the Monastic Orders.⁶ But how came it to pass that Wiclif and no other was the man to whom the gauntlet was thrown down? In his reply, Wiclif expresses his astonishment at the passionate heat with which the challenge to answer the arguments of his opponent had been directed in particular to his address. Nor is the explanation of the puzzle, which he mentions as having been suggested to himself by others, one which is at all satisfactory to ourselves. Three grounds, he says, had been named to him upon which the man had so acted—(1) in order that Wiclif's person might be compromised with the Court of Rome, and that he might be heavily censured and deprived

of his church benefices; (2) that the opponent himself with his connections might conciliate for themselves the favour of the Papal Court; and (3) that, as the effect of a more unlimited dominion of the Pope over England, the abbeys might be able to grasp in greater numbers the secular lordships of the kingdom, and without being amenable any longer to brotherly hindrance and control. Leaving the two last points untouched, the first point is indeed of a personal character, but it is at the same time of such a nature that we must of necessity ask again, how are we to explain the hostile interest which opponents had in selecting precisely Wiclif's person on this occasion, for the purpose of blackening his character at the Court of Rome, and to bring upon him in particular censures and material losses? The controversy alleged to have been commenced at an earlier date, between Wiclif and the Mendicant Orders, cannot be used for the explanation of this fact,⁷ because documentary history knows nothing of such a controversy carried on at that alleged date. Besides, Wiclif has here to do, beyond question, with a member of the *endowed* Orders, whose interests were by no means identical with those of the Mendicants, but often enough ran counter to them.⁸ And when it is urged that Wiclif must already before that time have made himself remarkable as an upholder of the independence and sovereignty of the State in relation to the Church, this, indeed, is extremely likely; but it is a mere conjecture, without any positive foundation, and is therefore of no real service to us as a solution of the difficulty.

Let us look more narrowly at the contents of the tract itself, and see whether it does not itself supply us with a solution of a more distinct and trustworthy kind.

The anonymous doctor had taken his stand upon the absolutely indefeasible right of the hierarchy. He had maintained, as regards persons, that under no circumstances could the clergy be brought before a civil tribunal (exemption); and in regard to Church property, he had laid down the proposition that temporal lords must never, nor under any conditions, withdraw from Churchmen their possessions. And with respect to the immediately pending question, touching the relation of the English Crown to the Papal See, he had maintained that the Pope had given the King the fief of the government of England, under condition that England should pay the yearly tribute of 700 marks to the Papal Court; but now this condition had remained for a time unfulfilled, and therefore the King of England had forfeited his right of monarchy.

In now addressing himself to exhibit this latter assertion in its true light, Wiclit begins by assuring his readers that he, as a humble and obedient son of the Church of Rome, would put forward no assertion which could sound as an injustice against that Church, or which could give any reasonable offence to a pious ear. And then he points his opponent for a refutation of his views to the votes and declarations of opinion which had been given in the Council of temporal lords.¹⁰ The first lord, a valiant soldier, had expressed himself thus: The kingdom of England was of old conquered by the sword of its nobles, and with the same sword has it ever been defended against hostile attacks. And even so does the matter stand in regard to the Church of Rome. Therefore my counsel is, let this demand of the Pope be absolutely refused, unless he is able to compel payment by force. Should he attempt that, it will be my business to withstand him in defence of our right.

The *second* lord had made use of the following argument:—A tax or a tribute may only be paid to a person authorised to receive it; now the Pope has no authority to be the receiver of this payment, and therefore any such claim coming from him must be repudiated. For it is the duty of the Pope to be a prominent follower of Christ; but Christ refused to be a possessor of worldly dominion. The Pope, therefore, is bound to make the same refusal. As, therefore, we should hold the Pope to the observance of his holy duty, it follows that it is incumbent upon us to withstand him in his present demand.

The *third* lord observed—It seems to me that the ground upon which this demand is rested admits of being turned against the Pope; for as the Pope is the servant of the servants of God, it follows that he should take no tribute from England except for services rendered. But now he builds up our land in no sense whatever, either spiritual or corporeal, but his whole aim is to turn its temporalities to his own personal use and that of his courtiers, while assisting the enemies of the country with gold and counsel. We must, therefore, as a matter of common prudence, refuse his demand. That Pope and Cardinals leave us without any help either in body or soul, is a fact which we know by experience well enough.

The *fourth* lord—My mind is, that it is a duty we owe to our country to resist the Pope in this matter. For, according to his principles, he is owner-in-chief of all the property which is gifted to the Church or alienated to her in mortmain. Now, as one-third of the kingdom at least is so held in mortmain, the Pope is head over the whole of that third; but in the domain of civil lordship, there cannot be two lords of equal right, but there must be one

lord superior, and the other must be vassal; from which it follows that during the vacancy of a church either the Pope must be the vassal of the King of England, or *vice versa*. But to make our King the inferior of any other man in this respect, we have no mind, for every donor in mortmain reserves to the King the right of feudal superiority. During that interval, therefore, the Pope behoves to be the inferior or vassal of the King. But now the Pope has always neglected his duty as the King's vassal, and, therefore, by this neglect he has forfeited his right.

The *fifth* lord puts the question, “What then may have been originally the ground upon which that undertaking (of King John) was entered into? Was that annual payment the condition of the King's absolution and his reinstatement in the hereditary right to the crown? For a pure gift, and a mere beneficence for all coming times, it could not in any case have been. On the former supposition (viz., that the payment was a condition of absolution), the agreement was invalid on account of the simony which was committed therein; for it is not allowable to bestow a spiritual benefit in consideration of the promise of temporal gains to be bestowed—“Freely ye have received, freely give” (Matt. x.). If the Pope imposed the tax upon the King as a penitential penalty, he ought not to have applied this alms-gift to his own uses, but should have given it to the Church of England which the King had wronged, as a compensation for the wrong.

But it is not in accordance with the spirit of religion to say—“I absolve thee under condition that thou payest me so much in all time coming.” When a man in this way breaks faith with Christ, other men may also break faith with him, in the matter of an immoral treaty. In

all reason a punishment should fall upon the guilty, not upon the innocent; but as such an annual payment falls not upon the guilty King, but upon the poor innocent people, it bears more the character of avarice than of a wholesome penalty. If, on the other hand, the second case be supposed, viz., that the Pope, in virtue of his concordat with King John, became feudal superior of the Royal House, it would then logically follow that the Pope would have power at his will and pleasure to dethrone a King of England under pretext of having forfeited his throne rightly, and to appoint, at his discretion, a representative of his own person upon the throne. Is it not, then, our duty to resist principles like these?

The *sixth lord*—It appears to me that the act of the Pope admits of being turned against himself. For if the Pope made over England to our King as a feudal fief, and if, in so doing, he did not usurp a superiority which did not belong to him, then the Pope, at the time of that transaction with King John, was the lord of our country. But as it is not allowable to alienate Church property without a corresponding compensation, the Pope had no power to alienate a kingdom possessed of revenues so rich for an annual payment so trifling; yea, he might at his pleasure demand our country back again, under the pretence that the Church had been defrauded of more than the fifth part of the value. It is necessary, therefore, to oppose the first beginnings of this mischief. Christ himself is the Lord-Paramount, and the Pope is a fallible man, who, in the event of his falling into mortal sin, loses his lordship in the judgment of theologians, and therefore cannot make good any right to the possession of England. It is enough, therefore, that we hold our kingdom as of old, immediately from Christ in

fief, because *He* is the Lord-Paramount, who, alone and by Himself, authorises, in a way absolutely sufficient, every right of property allowed to created beings.

The *seventh* lord—I cannot but greatly wonder that you have not touched upon the over-hastiness of the King, and upon the rights of the kingdom. And yet it stands fast that a hasty, ill-considered treaty, brought on by the King's blame, without the country's consent, can never, with competency and right, be allowed to operate to its permanent mischief. According to the law of the land (*consuetudo regni*), it is necessary, before a tax of this kind is imposed, that every individual in the country, either directly or by his lord-superior, should give his consent. Although the King and some few misguided persons gave their consent to the treaty, they had no warrant to do so, in the absence of the authority of the kingdom, and of the full number of consenting votes.

To these utterances of several lords in Parliament, Wiclf, in the tract referred to, adds little more, so far as it is known from the copy furnished by Lewis. He points out, with reason, that the treaty in question was proved, by the arguments developed in these speeches, to be both immoral and without authority. The speeches unmistakeably constitute the chief bulk of the tract, both in matter and space.

Before we proceed to a closer examination of the speeches which the tract communicates, let thus much be observed in a general way, that Wiclf in this piece, in opposition to the censures cast by the monks upon the recent legislative action of the kingdom, takes up the defence of that action with warmth and emphasis. The question was, whether the State, in certain cases, is entitled

to call in Church property, or whether such an act would, in all circumstances, be a wrong. The latter view was maintained by his opponents, the former is the contention of Wiclif; and this view, we shall find below, he systematically developed and established at full length.

Returning to the above speeches, it immediately appears upon an attentive examination, that the question of State-right, whether the payment demanded by the Pope as feudal superior of the kings of England ought to be made without delay, or ought to be decidedly repudiated, is elucidated in these speeches from the most manifold points of view. The first lord—a soldier—takes for his stand-point the right of the strongest,¹¹ trusts to his own good sword, and reckons with the amount of material force on both sides of the dispute. If this first speech is the outcome of a warrior-like realism, the second is inspired by a Christian idealism; for the speaker grounds his argument upon the ideal of a Pope as the follower of Christ *par excellence*, and would carry back the existing Pope to the condition of evangelical poverty. The third lord takes the stand-point of the country's interests, which it behoves the Pope, as “servant of the servants of God,” to promote, in order to acquire a right to corresponding services; but this he does neither spiritually nor materially. The fourth lord applies to the question the standard of *positive* law, especially of the feudal law. The Pope, upon his own principles, is the owner of all church property in England. Now Lord-Paramount of all this he cannot be, for such alone is the King; he must therefore be a vassal, but he has always disregarded his feudal duty to the throne, and therefore has forfeited his right. The fifth speaker enters into an examination of the different motives which may have led to the concordat in

question under King John, and proves the nullity of this concordat from the objectionable character of all the motives that can be thought of; for either there was an unchristian simony in the game, or else a usurpation which, for England, was insufferable. The sixth speaker, like the fourth, takes the feudal law for his starting point, but seeks to prove, that not the Pope, but Christ alone, is to be regarded as Lord-Paramount of the country. Last of all, the seventh lord applies to the question the standard of the constitution of the kingdom, and arrives at the conclusion that the concordat between King John and Innocent III. was invalid from the very first, by reason of its lacking the consent of the country in the persons of its representatives in Parliament.

If we compare, further, the ground ideas of these speeches with the decision of Parliament, of May 1366, of which, however, only the most general features have come down to us, it is immediately seen that the speeches and the decision in all essential respects agree. The vote of the seventh lord in Wiclif's tract is indeed entirely identical with the first ground given by Parliament in its Act of Repudiation, and the declaration of the first lord with the Parliament's concluding declaration. The conjecture, indeed, has been made, that the whole of these speeches may very well have been merely free compositions of Wiclif himself, preferring to put the bold thoughts which he wished to express into the mouths of others, rather than to come forward with them directly in his own person; and in doing so he has kept to the Act of Parliament and to the views of its most distinguished members, but not in the sense of reporting speeches which were actually delivered in Parliament.¹² But why it should not be believed that we have here a

report of speeches actually delivered, we fail to perceive. But if the ancient accounts of the proceedings in Parliament, notwithstanding their extremely summary character, are nevertheless in remarkable agreement with some, at least, of Wiclif's somewhat fuller speeches, in respect to the whole grounds assigned for these proceedings, and in the whole tone of confident defiance with which they conclude, this fact is in itself a weighty reason for thinking that Wiclif here introduces actual Parliamentary addresses.

But independently of this argument, it deserves to be well weighed that the whole effect of this polemical piece of Wiclif (the main substance of which, so far as it has come down to us, lies precisely in these speeches), depended essentially upon the fact that these speeches had been actually delivered. It may be thought, indeed, that the earls and barons of the kingdom at that period could hardly be credited with the amount of insight, and even occasionally of learning, which is conspicuous in these addresses. But this view can be maintained with all the less force of reason, that the Parliamentary life of England at that day had already held on its course for more than a century, and could not fail to bring with it an amount of practice in political business by no means to be under-estimated, as well as an equal development of interest in public affairs, arising from constant participation in their management. The only thing which can be alleged, with some appearance of force, against the view here taken, is the circumstance that some of the thoughts referred to are spoken, it may be alleged, from the soul of Wiclif himself, *e.g.*, what the second lord says of the Pope, that before all others it behoves him to be a follower of Christ in evangelical poverty, and the like. But at the present day men often fail to have any correct idea

of the wide extent to which, since the thirteenth century, the idea of “Evangelical Poverty” had prevailed. And it may well be conceived that ideas of Wiclif’s own, too, may at length have penetrated into those circles of English society to which the language now in question was attributed. So much, indeed, as this must be conceded, that the speeches, as they lie before us, were grouped together by Wiclif, and in some particulars so moulded by him that they bear unmistakeably here and there the peculiar colouring of the reporter. But this concession need not hinder our belief, that the principal substance of the several speeches was, in fact, taken from the actual proceedings in Parliament.¹³

If this is so, we cannot avoid the question, From what source did Wiclif learn so accurately these Parliamentary proceedings? The answer would be very simple, if the opinion expressed by some were well grounded, that Wiclif was personally present at that session of the Legislature as a hearer.¹⁴ But it is in the highest degree doubtful whether the proceedings of Parliament in that day were open to the public. The Parliament of that period was rather regarded as an enlarged Privy Council of the King, and if we are not mistaken, all traces are lacking of any man being permitted to be present at its sittings, who was neither a member of Parliament nor a commissioner of the King. On the other hand, it has been thought that Wiclif had received accurate information from one or other of those lords who were personally acquainted with him, and with whom he was associated by similar patriotic sentiments, and that he reported the speeches published by him upon the good faith of his informant. This conjecture is worth listening to; but what if Wiclif was himself a member of that

Parliament? If he was, it would then at once be plain how it came to pass that he and no other man was made the object of attack in reference to that Parliament.

At first sight, this idea may seem to be a conjecture more bold than probable. But however little known, it is a fact established by documentary evidence, that from the end of the thirteenth century, elected representatives of the inferior clergy were summoned to serve in Parliament.¹⁵ The fact, besides, is ascertained, that to the Parliament of 1366, besides bishops, abbots, and lords, six masters of arts were summoned by royal order.¹⁶ With these facts in view, it is quite conceivable that Wiclit might have had a seat and voice in that Parliament as an elected representative of the inferior clergy, or in virtue of a royal summons. The step, it is true, is still a long one, from abstract possibility to probability. But now I find, in the unprinted works of Wiclit, one passage at least, from the wording of which it appears clearly enough that he must have been once in Parliament, although this was some years later. In his book, *De Ecclesia*, he has occasion to remark that the Bishop of Rochester (this, without doubt, was Thomas Trillek) had told him under great excitement, in open sitting of Parliament, that the propositions which he had set forth in controversy had been condemned by the Papal Court.¹⁷ It is true that in this passage we must understand the reference to be to a later Parliament than that of 1366. I conjecture that the incident took place in 1376 or 1377, namely, before the Papal censure of Gregory XI. upon several of Wiclit's theses was publicly known. But though no more than this is attested, that Wiclit was ten years later a member of Parliament, it becomes not only possible but probable that he may already have been in Parliament sometime before that date.

However, I find also in his own writings a hint that Wiclif belonged to the May Parliament of 1366. If otherwise, what could be the sense and bearing of his words, when in the same tract which contains his speeches of the Lords, he says in one place,¹⁸ "If such things had been asserted by me against my King, they would have been inquired into before now, in the Parliament of the English Lords." If Wiclif had only published the views of which he speaks, in lectures or writings, it would have been impossible to understand why these must needs have become the subject of inquiry in Parliament. At least he could not himself have entertained such a thought, to say nothing of giving it utterance, without betraying an amount of vanity and excessive self-esteem such as formed no part of his character as we know it. The case is very different when we draw from the above words the conclusion (which seems to be the presumption which they logically imply), that Wiclif was himself a member of that Parliament in which that highly important question was the order of the day, and that he had there fully and emphatically unfolded his views. For indeed, in that case, if the view he took had touched too nearly the honour and the rights of the crown, it would not have been allowed to pass without decided contradiction on the part of men so patriotic as those speakers were.

Last of all, I believe that there is still another utterance of Wiclif which should be applied to this incident, although hitherto, indeed, it has been otherwise understood. At the very beginning of the remarkable tract still before us, Wiclif declares his readiness, in consideration of his being *peculiaris regis clericus*, i.e., in a peculiar sense a king's cleric, to take upon himself the office of replying to the opponent, who

attacks the law of the land.¹⁹ Lewis and Vaughan, and all who follow the latter, have understood this allusion to mean that Edward III. had nominated Wiclif to the office of king's chaplain.²⁰ But we do not find elsewhere a single trace of evidence by which this conjecture is confirmed. For this reason, it has been thought necessary to give the words another meaning—this, namely, that Wiclif meant by that expression to distinguish himself as a cleric of the National Church, in opposition to a cleric of the Papal Church.²¹ But this explanation does not quite satisfy us, on account of the “*talis qualis*” of the passage. For this expression of modesty is only in place if the three preceding words denote a certain function or social position, but not so if they indicate only a certain tendency and mode of thought. But what sort of distinguished position are we to think of under the title of a king's cleric, *peculiaris regis clericus*? I hold it to be not only possible but probable also, that under that title the summoning of Wiclif to Parliament by the act of the King is meant to be indicated; that is to say, that Wiclif had been called to the Parliament in question as a clerical expert, or in modern phrase, as a Government commissioner. This sense would answer very well to the *peculiaris regis clericus*. At least this view may be worth examination as a suggestion, as the meaning of the title used by Wiclif is still so far from being settled.

But the result itself, that Wiclif had a seat and vote in the Parliament of 1366, I venture to put forward as one for which I have produced sufficient grounds. The only adverse consideration which might be alleged against it rests upon the way in which Wiclif introduces his account of the speeches of those Lords. For his words sound in such a way as to convey, at first, the impression that the author's know-

ledge of the matter is only by hearsay. To this circumstance, however, no decisive weight can be assigned, for this reason, that possibly Wiclif wished to avoid the appearance as if he was boastful of having been himself an ear-witness of the speeches, and that he preferred to make his appeal to matters which were well enough known and talked about (*fertur*). But if the real state of the case was that which we think we have made probable, we have then an easier explanation, not only of the detailed character of the report of several of the speeches, but also of two additional points,—first, of the agreement of several ideas in those addresses with certain favourite views of Wiclif, for if Wiclif was a member of that Parliament he would be able to find all the easier access to men in high position, with the convictions which he cherished upon the great question of the day. And secondly, if Wiclif was then in Parliament, and had exercised some influence upon the decision arrived at, it will then be the more easy to understand why he in particular should have been singled out for challenge by the unnamed monk to whom the action of that Parliament was a thorn in the eyes. Under all circumstances, so much as this is clear, as the result of our investigation, that Wiclif took part, in a powerful and influential way, in the great Church and State questions of the day, and this in the direction of having much at heart the right and honour of the Crown, and the liberty and welfare of the kingdom.

If in this matter he was compelled to oppose himself to the claims of the Court of Rome, we are still without the slightest reason to regard as mere phraseology his solemn declaration that, as an obedient son of the Church, he had no wish to touch her honour too closely, or to injure

the interests of piety. We are unable, however, to agree with the observation, that Wiclif's dauntless courage and disinterestedness come out all the more conspicuously from his conduct in this business, that the process touching the headship of Canterbury Hall was at that time in dependence before the Roman Court. For if it be true, as we take it to be, along with other scholars before us, that the controversial tract before us was drawn up after the May Parliament of 1366, *i.e.*, in the year 1366 itself, or at latest, in the first months of the following year, Wiclif was still at that date in undisturbed possession of that position. For though Islip had died on 26th April 1366, Simon Langham was not installed Archbishop of Canterbury till 25th March 1367, and it was on the 31st March that he transferred the Wardenship of that Hall to the Benedictine, John Redingate. It appears, therefore, more than doubtful whether Wiclif was, at the date of the composition of this tract, already deposed from his dignity in the Hall; on the contrary, precisely this dignity may have been included among the "Church benefices," of which he was to be deprived, if things went agreeably to the wishes of his adversaries.

SECTION III.—*Events after 1366.*

WICLIF manifested the same spirit on another occasion, some years later. Unfortunately the sources of history do not flow here so richly as to enable us steadily to follow the course of his inner development and his external action. We are obliged, therefore, at this point to pass over an interval of six or seven years—the years next following which were sufficiently ill-fated for England in her foreign relations.

In May 1360, after the war with France had lasted for twenty-one years, the peace of Brétigny had been concluded. In this treaty the whole south-west of France, along with several cities on the north coast, was surrendered to the English Crown, without any reservation in favour of France of the feudal superiority of these possessions, but including full rights of sovereignty. On the other hand, England expressly renounced all claims to the French Crown, and to any further acquisitions of French territory. What was ceded to her, however, was a magnificent acquisition as it stood. But the peace of Brétigny became only a new apple of discord. Soon enough there sprang from it first a tension of feeling between the two nations, then a misunderstanding, and at last an open breach. The brilliant, but in the end barren, expedition of Edward the Black Prince to Spain in 1367, with the view of restoring Pedro the Cruel to the throne of Castile, led to a renewed outbreak of hostility with France, which had given its support to the usurper of the Castilian Crown, the Bastard Henry of Trastamara. This expedition brought upon the heir-apparent of the English throne an attack of gout, as the effect of the Spanish climate, under which he continued to suffer till, in 1376, he died. And when the war with France broke out again in 1369, it was an irreparable misfortune for England that the great general (who had developed, indeed, more military than administrative talent in the government of his principalities of Aquitaine and Gascony) was incapacitated by bodily disease to resume the post of command. Insurrection burst forth into flames in the ceded provinces of France, and could never again be subdued. One place of strength after another fell into the hands of the enemy. In August 1372 the city of Rochelle was again French. The

English rule over a good part of France was broken into fragments. But this was not all. The English fleet, too, could no longer, as hitherto, maintain its superiority ; on the contrary, the coasts of England were left a defenceless prey to every landing of the enemy's ships. Public opinion in England, as may readily be supposed, was much disconcerted and disturbed. So long as successes and martial glory had been the harvests of war, the nation had willingly borne the great sacrifices which had to be made in money and blood. But when the successes thus obtained vanished away like shadows, when disaster was heaped upon disaster, and when the country itself was menaced by the enemy, complaints became louder and louder, and grievances more and more bitter, till it was at last resolved to take action against the Government itself.

A Parliament met during Lent of 1371, and when Edward III. laid before it a demand for a subsidy in aid of the war of 50,000 silver marks, this proposal led, as it would appear, to very animated debates. On the one side a motion was made, and was also eventually carried, that the richly-endowed Church should be included, to a substantial amount, in the incidence of the new tax ; and on the other, the representatives of the Church, as was to be expected, did not fail to offer opposition to such a proposal. They used every effort to accomplish the exemption of the clergy, the rich monasteries, foundations, etc., from the new burden of taxation. It was very probably in that Parliament that one of the lords replied to the representations of some members of the endowed Orders in the form which Wiclif has preserved in one of his unpublished works.²² The far-seeing peer, in the course of the discussion, told the following fable :—“Once upon a time there was a meeting of many

birds; among them was an owl, but the owl had lost her feathers, and made as though she suffered much from the frost. She begged the other birds, with a trembling voice, to give her some of their feathers. They sympathised with her, and every bird gave the owl a feather, till she was overladen with strange feathers in no very lovely fashion. Scarcely was this done when a hawk came in sight in quest of prey; then the birds, to escape from the attacks of the hawk by self-defence or by flight, demanded their feathers back again from the owl; and on her refusal each of them took back his own feather by force, and so escaped the danger, while the owl remained more miserably unfledged than before."

"Even so," said the peer, "when war breaks out we must take from the endowed clergy a portion of their temporal possessions, as property which belongs to us and the kingdom in common, and we must wisely defend the country with property which is our own, and exists among us in superfluity." The hint was plain enough whence all church-property originally comes, as well as the menace—

"And art thou not willing,
Then use I main force."

The result was that the clergy had the worst of it. Taxes of unexampled weight were imposed upon them for all lands which had come into their hands by mortmain for the last 100 years, and even the smallest benefices which had never been taxed before, were subjected to the new war impost.

It cannot be doubted that there was an intimate connection between this financial measure and a new proposition which the same Parliament submitted to the Crown. The Lords and Commons proposed to the King to remove all prelates from the highest offices of State, and to appoint

laymen in their places, who could at all times be brought to answer for their proceedings before the temporal courts. This proposal of Parliament was in fact accepted by Edward III. The Bishop of Winchester, William of Wykeham, filled at that time the highest office in the State, as Lord Chancellor of England. The Bishop of Exeter was Treasurer, and the Lord Privy Seal was also a prelate. It does not appear, indeed, that Parliament had any personal objections against Wykeham and his colleagues--the proposal was made upon its own merits, and was chiefly designed to secure ministerial responsibility. But as early as the 14th of March, the Bishop of Winchester laid down the dignity of Chancellor, and was succeeded by Robert Thorp; and at the same date the offices of Treasurer and Keeper of the Seal were bestowed upon laymen. In February 1372, we find the whole Privy Council filled with laymen.²³ This change of ministers had its chief importance from its openly declared anti-clerical character. Apart from its bearing upon questions of home administration, especially financial ones, the aim of the measure was also to put the Government in an attitude of emphatic opposition to the encroachments of the Papal Court.

Under such circumstances, it is no wonder if the demands of the Papacy excited decided resistance on the part of a country exhausted by an unfortunate turn of the war, and even gave occasion to measures of precaution on the part of the Government. No doubt it was felt by very many to be an expression of what lay deep in their own hearts, when Wiclf stood forward against one of the Papal agents who were traversing the land to collect dues for the Curia, and in the form of a commentary on the obligations which these men took upon themselves by oath, opened an attack upon

the doings and traffickings of the Pope's nuncio as dangerous to the kingdom.

The occasion was this. In February 1372 appeared in England an agent of the Papal See, Arnold Garnier by name (Garnerius, Granarius), Canon of Chalons in Champaign, and licentiate of laws. He bore written credentials from Gregory XI., who had ascended the Papal Chair in 1370, as Papal nuncio and receiver of dues for the apostolic chamber. The man travelled with a train of servants and half-a-dozen horses. He remained for two years and a half in the country without a break, and may probably have collected no inconsiderable sums. In July 1374 he made a journey to Rome with the reserved intention of returning to England, for which purpose he was furnished with a royal passport, dated 25th July, which was of force till Easter 1375; and from a letter of Gregory XI. to Bishop Wykeham of Winchester, it appears that Garnier returned to England in due time, to carry forward his work as Nuncio and Receiver.²⁴ When this agent of the Roman Court arrived, in the first instance, he had obtained the consent of the Government to his collectorship, only under condition of swearing solemnly beforehand to a form of obligation in which the rights and interests of the Crown and kingdom were guarded on all sides. The Frenchman acceded to this condition without the slightest scruple, and on the 13th February 1372, in the royal palace of Westminster, in presence of all the councillors and great officers of the Crown, he formally and solemnly took the oath.²⁵

But with this formality all the misgivings of patriotic men had by no means been put to rest. Wiclif was one of these patriots, and by and bye he wrote a paper on the sworn obligations of the Papal Receiver, the drift of which was to inquire

whether Garnier was not guilty of perjury, in so far as he had taken an oath never to violate the rights and interests of the country, while yet such a violation was entirely unavoidable, when, according to his commission, he collected in England a large amount of gold and carried it out of the kingdom.²⁶ The proper aim of the inquiry appears to have been to show that there was an irreconcilable contradiction between the permission given by the State to collect monies for the Court of Rome on the one hand, and the intention to guard the country against all wrong to its interests on the other.

This short paper, it is true, was not written in 1372 or in one of the years next succeeding, but not till 1377, but Garnier was still in England at this later date, and was still plying his business as a Papal collector.²⁷ Its title, indeed, is not to be found in the catalogues of Wiclif's writings given by Bishop Bale and other literary historians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but it stands in a pretty full list of the works and tracts of Wiclif, which is found at the end of a Vienna manuscript (Cod. 3933, fol. 195). There is also an additional circumstance forming an external testimony to its Wiclif authorship not to be undervalued, that the paper forms part of another Vienna MS. (Cod. 1377) which contains in all no fewer than fifty pieces, most of them short ones, which are all the productions of Wiclif. This little tract, besides, in its thoughts and style of speaking, bears unmistakeable features of Wiclif's characteristic manner. In particular, we observe a remarkable agreement between this tract and the piece last examined, dating several years earlier, in the peculiar stand-point assumed by the writer, and the sentiment which lies at the basis of both. In both tracts, which in modern phrase we

might call “publicistic articles,” Wiclif stands before us chiefly in the light of a patriot, who has the honour and the best interests of the country very deeply at heart. In both also, especially in the latter, we learn to recognise him as a Christian patriot; we see in the patriotic defender of his country’s interests, the ecclesiastical Reformer already beginning to be moulded into shape; and we discern in him the vigorous germs of a coming development. The difference between the two tracts is partly in form and partly in matter. In form the earlier is defensive, the later aggressive. In substance the later piece goes deeper into Church questions than its predecessor, owing to the difference of the two occasions which called them forth.

To elucidate more exactly the peculiar character of the tract at present before us, we bring into view, before everything else, this feature of it—that it recognises the domestic prosperity of the country, and the wealth of the public purse, and the military strength of England in relation to foreign enemies, as valuable blessings which must not be allowed to suffer damage. And from this mention of the enemies of the kingdom, it appears clearly enough how much at that time the actual and possible incidents of the French war were occupying all minds, and filling them with earnest anxiety.

A second characteristic feature which strikes the eye in the reading of these pages is the decidedly *constitutional* spirit which is conspicuous in them. The Parliament occupies in them an important position as the representative of the nation, having authority to sit in judgment upon the question of what is injurious to the national interests. And it is to be referred to the same point of view when the author desires to see the State take under its protec-

tion the long-descended civil rights of the priests and clerics of the National Church, in opposition to the encroachments of the Papal Receiver.

Further, it is not to be overlooked that Wiclif is conscious of giving expression in the main only to what is felt and thought by no small portion, yea, by the majority of the population. He knows that he is uttering what is in the minds of great numbers.²⁸ But equally strong, and still more important than the national and patriotic spirit of the author, is the religious and moral, and even the evangelical spirit which he manifests in the way in which he handles the matter with which he is occupied. When Wiclif puts forward the principle that the assistance of God is greatly more valuable than the help of man, and that remissness in the defence of Divine right is a more serious sin than negligence in the duty of defending a human right, he makes his reader feel that he is not in this only formally repeating, perhaps, a traditional maxim, but giving utterance to a weighty truth out of the deepest conviction, and with the innermost sympathy, of his heart and conscience. And it is only an application of this general principle when, as if to complete and give the right interpretation of what he has said on the subject of the national welfare, Wiclif makes the remark that the well-doing of the kingdom rests upon the religious beneficence of its people, particularly on pious foundations in behalf of the Church and the poor. We also feel the moral earnestness of his tone, and especially the conscientiousness with which he pressed the duty of truthfulness when, in allusion to the sophistical speeches and excuses made use of either by the Papal agents themselves, or by their friends and defenders, he pronounces with great

emphasis against a species of craft and guile, which, by means of mental reservations, would bring things to such a pass that even the oath would no longer be “an end of all strife” (Heb. vi. 16). Again, it is a principle of morals and religion which we find expressed by Wiclid in this piece, as so often elsewhere, with peculiar emphasis, that a common participation in sin and guilt is incurred when one knows of the evil-doings of a second party, and might put a stop to them if he would, but neglects to do it. And it is only the positive side of this thought when it is asserted that the command to inflict brotherly punishment (Matt. xviii. 15), makes it a duty to offer resistance to a transgressor whose evil doing might be expected to spread by contagion to others.³⁰

But more characteristic than all else is what Wiclid gave expression to in this tract respecting the Pope and the pastoral office. That the Pope may commit sin was expressed before in one of the parliamentary speeches of the earlier piece; but in the present one that proposition is repeated more strongly still.³¹ In connection with this view, Wiclid also declares himself opposed to the theory which maintains that absolutely everything which the Pope thinks fit to do must be right, and have the force of law, simply because he does it. In other words, we find Wiclid already in opposition here to the absolutism of the Curia. He is far removed, however, from a merely negative opposition. On the contrary, he puts forward a positive idea of the Papacy, according to which the Pope is bound to be pre-eminently the follower of Christ in all moral virtues—especially in humility and patience and brotherly love. And next, the views which he expresses respecting the pastoral office are well worthy of observation. Whilst

severely censuring the Papal collectors for compelling, by help of ecclesiastical censures, those priests who had to pay annates (*primi fructus*) to the Curia, to make their payments in coin instead of in kind (*in natura*), he brings into special prominence, as a crying abuse, the fact, that by this undue pressure put upon them, the priests find themselves under the necessity (as they must have the means of living) of holding themselves harmless at the expense of their poor parishioners, and, on the other hand, neglecting the services of public worship, which they are bound to celebrate. From this allusion thrown out only in passing, we perceive what a watchful eye he must have kept upon the pastoral office and upon its conscientious execution—a subject to which, at a later period, he gave all the fullness and energy of his love. Last of all, we will only call attention to this further point, that already, in this small and essentially "publicistic paper," the principle makes its appearance which Wiclif afterwards asserted in a manner which introduced a new epoch, viz., that Holy Scripture is for Christians the rule and standard of truth. There is a hint, at least, of this principle when Wiclif says of the payments in question to the Court of Rome that they are obtained by begging *in a manner contrary to the gospel* (*elemosina præter evangelium mendicata*).

From all this, this small piece, which has remained unknown till the present time, appears to us to be not without value, in as much as, on the one hand, it shows us the manner of Wiclif's intervention in an affair of weighty public importance, and lets us clearly see, on the other, in the patriot inspired with undaunted zeal for his country's good, the earliest germs of his later strivings for the Reformation of the Church.

SECTION IV.—*Wiclif as a Royal Commissary in Bruges, 1374, and his Influence in the “Good Parliament” of 1376.*

IN the year 1373 the Parliament had raised again, once more, loud complaints that the rights of patrons were ever more and more infringed and made illusory by Papal provisions. To a petition of the Parliament drawn up in this sense, the King gave answer, that he had already sent commands to his commissioners, who were at that very time engaged in peace negotiations with France, to negotiate also upon this business with the Roman Court. He had in this behalf given a commission to John Gilbert, Bishop of Bangor, with one monk and two laymen. These commissioners proceeded to Avignon, and treated with the commissaries of Gregory XI. for the removal of various causes of complaint on the part of the kingdom, especially of the Papal reservations in the filling of English church offices, encroachments upon the electoral rights of cathedral chapters, and the like. The commissioners received conciliatory promises, but no distinct and definite answer. The Pope reserved himself for further consultation with the King of England, and for a decision at a subsequent date.³¹

The further negotiations thus held out in prospect were opened in 1374, in connection with the conferences for the peace, which were still going on in Bruges between England and France. At the head of the peace embassy stood a Prince of the Blood, John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, third son of Edward III., with the Bishop of London, Simon Sudbury. For treating with the commissaries of the Pope on the pending ecclesiastical questions, were commissioned by the King the before-named John

Gilbert, Bishop of Bangor, and in addition, John Wiclf, Doctor of Theology, Magister John Guter, Dean of Segovia,³³ Doctor of Laws, Simon of Multon, William of Burton, Knight, Robert of Belknap,³⁴ and John of Kenyngton. The commission, dated 26th July 1374, conveyed to the King's commissioners plenary powers to conclude such a treaty with the Papal nuncios on the pending points, as should at once secure the honour of the Church, and uphold the rights of the English Crown and realm.³⁵ It is, on the one hand, characteristic of the views by which the Government of England at that time was guided, that a man like Wiclf should have been made a royal commissioner for these diplomatic transactions with the Roman Court. On the other hand, it was a high honour for Wiclf that he, and that, too, as first in order of the commissioners after the Bishop of Bangor, was selected along with others to represent the rights of the Crown and the interests of the kingdom in a treaty with the plenipotentiaries of the Pope. We see in this fact what confidence was felt in his spirit and insight, in his courage and power of action, on the part both of the Government and the country.

On the very next day after the commission had been issued, namely 27th July 1374, Wiclf embarked in London for Flanders.³⁶ It was the first time in his life that he had been abroad. Bruges was at that time a great city of 200,000 inhabitants, which, from its important industries, its widely extended trade, the wealth of its burghers, its municipal freedom, and its political power, had a large number of instructive objects of attention to show to the stranger; especially at a time when an important congress was assembled within its walls. On the side of France two

royal princes, the Dukes of Anjou and Burgundy, brothers of the reigning King, Charles V., were present, in addition to many bishops and notables of the kingdom. As English plenipotentiaries appeared, in addition to the Duke of Lancaster, the Earl of Salisbury, and Simon Sudbury, Bishop of London. The Pope sent in behoof of the treaty between France and England the Archbishop of Ravenna and the Bishop of Carpentras; and commissioned several other prelates, with full powers to negotiate with England on the questions of ecclesiastical right still in dependence. These nuncios were Bernard, Bishop of Pampelona, Ralph, Bishop of Sinigaglia, and Egidius Sancho, Provost of the archi-episcopal chapter of Valencia.³⁷ There was no lack, therefore, in Bruges of men in high place and of great political or ecclesiastical importance, with whom Wiclit, as a prominent man among the English envoys, must have come more or less into contact in the transaction of public business, and no doubt also in social intercourse.

It was, we may be sure, of lasting value for him, that he should have had on this occasion the opportunity of transacting business and cultivating intercourse with Italian, Spanish, and French dignitaries of the Church—all of them men who enjoyed the confidence of the Pope and the cardinals. Here he had it in his power to take many observations in a field of view which could not easily be laid open to his eye among his own countrymen, even among those of them who were most conspicuous for their devotion to the Roman Court. For “The Anglican Church” (this name is no anachronism) had within a century attained to a certain degree of independence in regard to principles and views of ecclesiastical law, to which the life and spirit of the Italian and Spanish Church of that period formed a

sensible contrast. Upon a personality like Wiclif, of so much independence of mind, and already inspired with so much zeal for the autonomy of his native church, this residence in Bruges, and its negotiations of several weeks duration with the plenipotentiaries of the Curia, must have made impressions similar to those which Dr. Martin Luther received from his sojourn in Rome in 1510.

But even apart from his relations to foreign notabilities, Wiclif's sojourn in Bruges had important consequences for him, by the nearer relations into which it brought him with the Duke of Lancaster. This Prince at that time already possessed great and decisive influence upon the Government. He was usually called "John of Gaunt," for he was born in Ghent, when Edward III., at the beginning of the French war, was in alliance with the rich cities of Flanders, and, with his Queen Philippa, was keeping his court in that city in 1340. The Prince's first title was Earl of Richmond, but after his marriage with Blanche, a daughter of the Duke of Lancaster, he became, on the death of the latter, the heir of his title and possessions. After the death of his first wife, in 1369, he entered into a second marriage in 1372, as before stated, with Constance, the daughter of Peter the Cruel, of Castile and Leon, and now took the style by hereditary right of "King of Castile." But this was never more than a title. He never himself wore a crown; but in the following century three of his descendants ascended the English throne, viz., his son, his grandson, and his great-grandson—Henry IV., Henry V., and Henry VI.—the House of Lancaster and the Red Rose, from 1399-1472.

Already, however, the father of this dynasty manifested ambition enough to awaken the suspicion that he was aiming at the English crown for his own person. In military

talent he stood far behind his eldest brother ; the Black Prince was an eminent military genius. John of Gaunt was a brave swordsman and nothing more. But in political and administrative capacity he was indisputably superior to the Prince of Wales. When the latter found himself obliged to return to England at the beginning of 1371, on account of the obstinate disease which he had contracted in the Spanish campaign, instead of recovering his vigour on his native soil, he had fallen into a chronic condition of broken health and low spirits, which unfitted him for taking any active part in the business of government ; whilst his father, too, Edward III., was now become old and frail. Lancaster had known how to make use of all these circumstances for the ends of his own ambition, and had acquired ever since his return in the summer of 1374 from the south of France the most decided influence over the King, and the conduct of public affairs. The second prince of the blood, Lionel, Duke of Clarence, was already dead in 1368. For the present, indeed, Lancaster undertook only the lead of the peace negotiations in Bruges ; but it almost appears as if even from Flanders he had governed both the King and the kingdom.

That it was first in Bruges that the Duke became acquainted with Wiclif, or entered into closer relations with him, is by no means probable. It was he, no doubt, who was the cause of Wiclif's being appointed to take part in these ecclesiastical negotiations. In regard, at least, to John Guter, the Dean of Segovia, who had perhaps accompanied the Duke to the Spanish campaign in the capacity of Field-Chaplain, it can hardly admit of a doubt that it was to the Duke he was indebted for his nomination upon the commission, as well as for his Spanish prebend ; and it

would have been truly surprising if a statesman like the Prince—a zealous promoter of lay government, a persistent opponent of the influence of the English hierarchy upon the administration—had not already for years had his attention and his favour directed to Wiclit, as a man of whose gifts and bold spirit he might hope to be able to make use for his own political objects. I quite concur, therefore, in Pauli's conjecture³⁸ that it was probably Lancaster himself who had brought about the employment of Wiclit upon a mission of so great importance. But be this as it may, these two men could not fail to be much in contact, and to have much exchange of ideas with each other, both in matters of business and in social intercourse, during all the time that they were occupied with that congress in Flanders. The Duke, indeed, in the first instance, had to transact only with France, and his business with the Papal Plenipotentiaries was limited to giving his consent to the conclusions arrived at. But still he stood at the head of the whole English legation, and on this account alone, as well as by reason of his personal tendencies and way of thinking, he could not fail to take the liveliest interest in the course of those negotiations which bore upon the ecclesiastical *gravamina* of the country; and among the members of this ecclesiastical commission Wiclit was at least one of the most free from prejudice, and of the deepest insight.

A few years later, we see the Duke of Lancaster step forward publicly as Wiclit's patron and protector. This favour, grounded upon esteem and personal knowledge of Wiclit, no doubt increased during the conference of Bruges, though it could scarcely have commenced there.

Wiclit returned to England, after the close of the congress, before the middle of September. Neither official documents

nor any accounts of contemporary or later chronicles, have come down to us respecting the proceedings of the congress in the matter of the Church-grievances of England, although, no doubt, some original papers belonging to the subject lie concealed in the archives of Rome.

We can only draw some inferences from the final result arrived at, as to what was the course of the transactions. In this respect, indeed, it would seem that the negotiations between the Papal Court and England had come to a similar issue as those between France and England. The Chronicler of St. Alban's, Walsingham, has no good to say of the behaviour of France in the peace congress. The thoughts of the French, he says, during all that time were craftily running not on peace, but on war; they were preparing again their old weapons and forging new ones in order to have all the requirements of war in readiness; while the Englishmen had no thoughts of this kind, accustomed as they are not to be led by prudence and foresight, but only to be driven like unreasoning brutes by the goad. But no doubt they trusted everything to the wisdom of the Duke, and thinking that his eloquence would suffice to obtain for them the blessings of peace, they gave themselves up to carousals and all manner of amusements. Thus it came to pass that the Englishmen unawares came to grief, for the congress was broken off without "the conclusion of peace."³⁹ And the congress between England and the Curia came to a like fruitless conclusion. The representatives of the Roman See, like the plenipotentiaries of France, appear to have busied themselves with the refurbishing of their old weapons, while they were, at the same time, preparing new ones. The Convention in which the congress issued was not of a kind to secure for the future a redress of the Church-

grievances of which the country complained. England undoubtedly fared the worst in the arrangements arrived at, although the Pope made some concessions upon single points; for these concessions were more apparent than real, and consisted more in matters of detail than in general principles.

On the 1st September 1375, Gregory XI. directed to the King of England six bulls relating to this business,⁴⁰ which amounted in effect briefly to this—to recognise accomplished facts, and to leave the *status quo* untouched. Whosoever was in actual possession of a church living in England should no longer have his right of incumbency challenged on the side of the Curia; whosoever had had his right to a church office disputed by Urban V., should no longer have his confirmation in the office reserved; benefices which the same Pope had already reserved, in the event of a vacancy, should, in so far as they had not already become vacant, be filled up by the patrons themselves; and all annates or first fruits not yet paid should be remitted. In addition, it was conceded that the Church revenues of several cardinals who held prebends in England should be subject to impost, to cover the costs of the restoration of churches and other church edifices belonging thereto, which the holders had allowed to fall into ruin.

At first sight these appeared to be numerous and important concessions, but when carefully examined they were of small consideration, for they all related to matters which belonged to the past. For the future the Pope remitted nothing of his claims, not even in the smallest trifles. Besides, these concessions referred merely to single cases—they regulated only matters of detail, and left the principle entirely untouched. The bulls, it is true, contained also

matters of greater importance; the Pope abandoned for the future his claim to the reservation of English Church livings; but the King was also bound, on his side, to abstain in future from conferring Church dignities in the way of simple royal command. But first of all, the Pope herein conceded a surrender of right on his side, only in consideration of a corresponding concession on the side of the Crown; and in the second place, the concession contained no security, even the least, that the electoral rights of the cathedral chapters should remain thenceforward untampered with. And yet this had been a capital point aimed at in the efforts of the country, and especially of Parliament, to obtain ecclesiastical reform. That this decisive point had not been made clear and plain by the treaty of 1374, is brought into view and censured even by Walsingham himself, with all his disposition to favour the Church.⁴¹

Whether the other members of the ecclesiastical commission had fulfilled their duty, may be fairly asked; but in regard to Bishop John Gilbert, who stood at the head of it, it is a highly significant fact that eleven days after the drawing up of the above bulls—12th September 1375—he was promoted by the Pope to a more important bishoprick. He had lost nothing of Gregory's favour by his conduct at Bruges. Hitherto he had been Bishop of Bangor; his diocese embraced the most distant northwest corner of the principality of Wales. But now, when the Bishop of London, Simon Sudbury, was made Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Bishop of Hereford, William Courtenay, was promoted to London, Gilbert was nominated to the See of Hereford.

The “concordat” which had been concluded between England and the Pope had little enough of importance. It would have been incomparably better to have advanced

on the same path which had been trodden in 1343 and 1350, and to have stemmed the evils of the Church by means of national legislation, than to make the attempt to find a remedy for them by diplomatic transactions with the Papal Court. In the very next spring it became manifest that the complaints of the country were by no means silenced by that convention. Louder and bolder than ever sounded forth the grievances of Parliament, when it assembled in the end of April 1376; and that the representatives of the country uttered, in point of fact, the true feeling of the people, is evident from the fact that this Parliament lived long afterwards in the grateful memory of the nation, by the name of the Good Parliament.⁴²

The Parliament represented to the King, in a lengthened memorial, how oppressively and perniciously the encroachments of the Roman See operated;⁴³ the aggressions of the Pope are to blame for the impoverishment of the kingdom,—for the sums which are paid to Him for the dignified offices of the Church amount to five times as much as the whole produce of the taxes which accrue to the King. There is no prince in Christendom so rich as to have in his treasury even the fourth part of the sum which iniquitously goes out the kingdom. Moreover, the Church Brokers in the dissolute city of Avignon, promoted for money many wretched creatures, who were utterly destitute of learning and character, to livings of one thousand marks annual income; while a Doctor of Theology or the Canon Law must content himself with a salary of twenty marks; and hence the decay of learning in the country. And when foreigners, yea, enemies of the country, are the possessors of English Church livings, without ever having seen their parishioners, or giving themselves any trouble about

them, the effect is to bring the service of God into contempt, and to do more injury to the Church than is done by Jews or Saracens. And yet the law of the Church prescribes that Church livings ought only to be conferred from pure love, without payment or solicitation; and reason and faith, as well as law, demand that Church endowments which have been founded from motives of devotion, should be bestowed for the glory of God and suitably to the founder's intention, and not upon foreigners living in the midst of our enemies. God has entrusted the care of the sheep to the Holy Father, the Pope, to feed them, not to fleece them. But if lay patrons witness the avarice and simony of the churchmen, they will learn from their example to sell the offices to which they have the right of collation, to men who will devour the people like beasts of prey—just as the Son of God was sold to the Jews, who thereupon put him to death.

A considerable portion of the complaint of Parliament is directed against the Papal Collector, a French subject who lives in the country along with other foreigners who are the king's enemies, and is ever on the look-out for English places and dignities, and seeking to spy out the secrets of the kingdom, to its great damage. This Receiver, who is at the same time the collector of Peter's Pence, has a great house in London, with clerks and officers, as if it were the custom-house of a Prince, and from thence he sends to the Pope about twenty thousand marks a year. This same man, in the present year, has, for the first time, put forward a claim to the first-fruits of all newly-conferred livings, a claim which has hitherto been limited to offices which have become vacant in the Papal Court. Even if the kingdom at this moment had as great a superfluity of gold as it ever possessed, the Pope's collectors and the agents of the

Cardinals would soon enough carry off the whole of this income to foreign parts. As a remedy for this evil, let a law be laid down, that no Receiver or agent shall take up his residence in England, upon pain of life and limb; and that upon a like penalty, no Englishman shall become such a Receiver or agent in behalf of others who reside in Rome. For the better investigation of the facts, in relation especially to the Papal Receiver, inasmuch as the whole clergy are dependent upon the favour or disfavour of the latter, and would not willingly run the risk of drawing upon themselves his displeasure, it would conduce to the end in view, if the Lords and Commons of the present Parliament would call before them the priest of St. Botolph's, John Strensale, who resides in Holborn. He could, if strictly required to do so, give them much information, as he has for more than five years done service as a clerk to the said Receiver.

It was further set forth, that Cardinals and other prelates, some of them, it is true, natives of England, but the most of them foreigners who reside in Rome, are occasionally possessed of the best prebends in England. One Cardinal is Dean of York, another of Salisbury, a third of Lincoln; another again is Archdeacon of Canterbury, one of Durham, one of Suffolk, and so on; and these Cardinals cause to be remitted to them in foreign parts a yearly revenue of twenty thousand marks. The Pope will in time hand over to enemies of the kingdom all the lands which belong to the prebends referred to, as he deals so arbitrarily from one day to another with the Kingdom and the Regalia. When a bishopric becomes vacant by death or otherwise, he translates from four to five other bishops in order to obtain from each of them the first year's fruits;⁴⁶ and the like takes place with other church

dignities in the realm. As to the abbeys and convents, a loud complaint is made that all those of them which have hitherto possessed the right of free election of their own superiors, have been deprived of this right by the usurpation of the Pope, who claims the right for himself. Last of all, and to come back again to the point of finance, the petition of Parliament called attention to this fact, that the Pope is in the act of raising subsidies from the English clergy in order to buy off Frenchmen who were taken prisoners by the English, and to aid him in carrying on wars of his own in Lombardy. In addition to which, the English Clergy are required to bear the cost of every mission which the Pope sends to the country, and all this is done purely out of love to the kingdom and to English gold.

Such was the long array of grievances. The Parliament emphatically assured the King that they brought them forward solely from an honest zeal for the honour of the Holy Church; for all the troubles and disasters which had recently befallen the land were only just judgments for the sin of allowing the church to become so deformed and corrupt. Great injustice has always been followed by misfortune and ruin, and will always have the like consequences. Let measures, therefore, be devised to provide a remedy, and this all the more that the current year is the jubilee of the fifty years reign of the King, and therefore a year of grace and joy;⁴⁶ but greater grace and joy for the kingdom there could not be, and none which would be more well-pleasing at once to God and his Church than that such a remedy should be provided by the King.

Some positive proposals were in fact made touching the ways and means of accomplishing the end in view. The

first step must be to send two letters to the Pope, the one in Latin under the King's seal, the other in French under the seals of the high nobility, pressing for redress in the matters mentioned, a course which had on a former occasion been taken at the instance of Parliament.⁴⁷ Further, it was pressed upon the attention of the Government that they might renew all those ordinances which had already been published against provisions and reservations on the side of Rome. It would also be advisable to provide, that on pain of imprisonment, no money should be taken out of the kingdom by exchange or otherwise. What measures, in addition, were proposed to be taken against the traffic of the Papal collectors, have already been mentioned.

To this representation the King sent for reply that he had already on previous occasions provided a sufficient remedy in the way of legislation for the evils complained of; he was, besides, at that very time in communication with the Papal See upon the subject, and would further continue to make such communications from time to time until a remedy was provided. This answer sounded lukewarm enough, especially when contrasted with the petition of Parliament, which was so warmly expressed, and adduced at great length so many grounds in support of its prayer. But though the patriotic zeal of the latter must have been considerably cooled by this royal decision, the Parliament of the next year, January 1377, took up the thread again at the point where the present Parliament had suffered it to drop; and for the sake of connection, this incident may as well be anticipated in this place. The Commons, in 1377, gave in a petition to the King to the effect that the statutes against *provisions*, which had from time to time been passed, should be strictly carried into execution, and that measures should be adopted against

those Cardinals who had obtained for themselves in the two provinces of Canterbury and York reservations, with the clause *anteferri*, to the annual value of from twenty to thirty thousand golden crowns. They renewed also their complaints against the Pope's collectors. It was Englishmen who had always been wont to hold that office, but now it was a Frenchman, who lived in London and kept a large office, which cost the clergy 300 pounds a-year; and this man sends every year to the Pope 20,000 marks, or 200,000 pounds. It would be a means of resisting these innovations and usurpations, if all foreigners, so long as the wars lasted, were driven out of the country, and if all Englishmen were prohibited, upon pain of outlawry, to farm these revenues from the Papal Court, or to make remittances of money to the same without express permission.⁴⁸

The proposals of the Good Parliament of 1376, the echoes of which we still catch in 1377, are of such a character that I am bold to maintain that they afford strong evidence of the influence of Wiclif. In proof of this I point first of all to the circumstance that the proceedings of the Papal Collector of that time were one of the Parliament's heaviest subjects of complaint. And this collector was certainly no other than that Arnold Garnier, to whose doings and traffickings Wiclif's tract of the year 1377 refers. Further, I bring into view the fact that in the petition presented by Parliament various national calamities, including not only the rapid impoverishment of the country, but also famine and disease among men and cattle, are set forth as consequences of the moral disorders which had spread and prevailed in the Church as the effect of the Papal usurpations, and of the blameworthy negligence of the

Government and the people.⁴⁹ Now, exactly this thought is one to which Wiclit so often recurs in different writings, that I must designate it one of his favourite ideas. But independently of this, it is much more allowable to think that an idea so peculiar was thrown out at first by some personage of mark, and afterwards adopted by a whole body, than that a political body first gave expression to it, and that the idea was afterwards taken up and appropriated at second hand by one of the greatest thinkers of the age. Add to all this yet another circumstance, viz., the incident already mentioned of the Bishop of Rochester,⁵⁰ in a solemn sitting of Parliament, casting in Dr. Wiclit's face the accusation that his Theses had already been condemned by the Roman Court. This incident can in no case have occurred in an earlier Parliament than that of 1376. For the excited language of the Bishop cannot possibly have been uttered after the Papal censure of Wiclit's nineteen propositions had been published to the world. Evidently the speaker's intention was to make public mention of a fact which up till that time had remained a secret, and the censure of Gregory XI. was formally signed on 22d May 1377. Accordingly it might be thought a possible case, that the scene referred to occurred in that Parliament which assembled on 27th January 1377, the year of Edward III.'s death; and in support of this view the consideration would be of weight, that at this date the information of what had been concluded in Rome against Wiclit might have reached the ear of a member of the English episcopate.

But still this conjecture does not bear examination. For the language of the Bishop of Rochester cannot well have been made use of after Wiclit's summons to appear before the English prelates, and this summons had already been issued

on 19th February 1377. Various circumstances, therefore, make the supposition a probable one, that the reproach of the Bishop against Wiclit was uttered in some sitting of the Parliament of 1376. But this date need not have been too early for the Bishop's knowledge of what was then doing in Rome against Wiclit; for it may well be presumed that a step such as that which Gregory XI. took in the bulls of 22d May 1377 must have originated in a suggestion from England made a considerable time before that date, and must have been prepared in Rome itself during an interval of considerable length. All this warrants the supposition that Wiclit himself was a member of the Good Parliament of 1376, by virtue, we may conjecture, of royal summons. And presupposing this fact, we do not doubt for a moment that he was one of the most influential personalities in the mixed affairs of Church and State, which formed so conspicuous a part of the business of that Parliament. If, at an earlier period, he had shared strongly in the outburst of national feeling, and of the constitutional spirit which was so characteristic of England in the fourteenth century; still more had he become, in the course of years, one of the leaders of the nation in the path of ecclesiastical progress. This Parliament, indeed, was the culminating point of the influence of Wiclit upon the nation. From that date his influence upon it rather declined, at least in extent of surface, or, so to say, in breadth. On the other hand, the effects which he produced from that time went deeper down into the heart of the English people than they had ever done before.

There was still another direction in which the Parliament of 1376 employed its efforts for the improvement of public affairs. In 1371, as before stated, under the influ-

ence of a prevailing anti-clerical sentiment, the representatives of the nation had brought forward and carried into effect a proposition that the highest offices of the State should be entrusted to the hands of laymen, instead of the bishops and prelates. But in the course of years there had spread a marked discontent with the Government, as it was from that time conducted. King Edward III. had become almost worn out with old age. Since the death of his queen Philippa (1369), one of her ladies, Alice Perrers, had obtained his favour in an extraordinary degree, and had not only taken a conspicuous position in the Court, but had also unduly meddled in many affairs of State. The influence of this lady the Duke of Lancaster had now turned to his own account, in order to acquire for himself a preponderating weight with his royal father in the business of Government. He was credited, indeed, with designs of a much wider reach. The Prince of Wales, diseased and near his end as he was, was still able to perceive the danger, and, in spite of his forced retirement from the business of State, took into his hand the threads of an intrigue by which the succession to the Crown should be assured to his son Richard, a boy only nine years of age, and the party of his younger brother, John of Gaunt, should be thwarted in their designs. He found means to induce the House of Commons and the clergy to form a coalition against the dominant party of the Duke of Lancaster.

Foremost in the management of the affair was Peter de la Mere, chamberlain of the Earl of March, a nobleman who, in virtue of the hereditary right of his Countess, had the nearest presumptive claim to the Throne. This officer of the Court was, at the same time, Speaker of the House of Commons. Upon occasion of the voting of subsidies, the

representatives of the counties complained, through their Speaker, of the evil condition of the financial administration, and even of dishonest under- and over-charges which were practised. The persons who were accused and convicted of these mal-practices were the Treasurer, Lord Latimer, a confidant of the Duke of Lancaster, and Alice Perrers herself. The former was put in prison, the latter banished from the Court. The Duke himself, who was the party really aimed at, no man was bold enough expressly to name; on the other hand, it was proposed, evidently with the view of making the Camarilla incapable of mischief, to strengthen the Privy Council by the addition of from ten to twelve lords and prelates, who should always be about the King, so that without the assent of six, or at least four of their number, no royal ordinance could be carried into effect. This decisive action of Parliament against the Court party of the Duke of Lancaster was so much after the nation's own heart, that it was principally for this service that the Parliament received the honourable epithet of 'The Good.'⁵¹ While this movement was in progress, Edward the Black Prince died 8th June 1376—held in equally high esteem as a warrior, and as a man of upright and amiable character. The last care of the deceased prince had been to secure the right of his son and heir, and the House of Commons, sharing the same solicitude, presented an urgent petition to the aged King that he would now be pleased to present to the Parliament his grandson Richard of Bourdeaux, as heir-apparent to the Throne; which was also done on the 25th of June.

But scarcely was Parliament prorogued at the beginning of July, when all the measures which it had originated were again brought to nothing; the Duke of Lancaster once

more seized the rudder; Lord Latimer recovered again his share in public affairs; and another friend of the Duke, Lord Percy, was named Lord Marschall. Even Alice Perrers came back again to Court. The Camarilla completely surrounded the aged King. The leaders of the party of the deceased Prince of Wales were compelled to feel the revenge of the small but powerful Court party. Peter de la Mere, Speaker of the House of Commons, was sent to prison, where he remained in durance for nearly two years. The Bishop of Winchester was impeached and banished twenty miles from the Court, and the temporalities of his see were sequestrated.

The question arises, what share Wiclf had in the efforts of the Good Parliament to secure the rightful succession to the throne, and to purge the court as well as the administration of unworthy elements. Assuming that he was a member of that Parliament, and co-operated influentially in its ecclesiastico-political proceedings, he could not have remained entirely without a share in its endeavours to secure the succession to the throne, and to reform the Court and the Government. He must have taken his place either on one side or the other. It is true that we hear nothing definite from himself upon the subject, nor very express testimony concerning it from any other quarter. But we may be sure at least of as much as this, that in no case can he have played a prominent part in the effort to drive the favourites of the Duke of Lancaster from the court, and from all influence in state affairs, for otherwise the Duke would certainly not have lent him his powerful protection only half-a-year later (on 19th February 1377). But on the other hand, it scarcely admits of being supposed that Wiclf would join the party of Lord Latimer and his colleagues,

especially as in this business the interests at stake were of that moral and legal character for which, in accord with his whole tone of thought, he must always cherish a warm sympathy. These considerations taken together lead me to the opinion that Wiclif did not indeed oppose himself to the majority of the Parliament who laboured to effect a purification of the Court and Government, but neither did he take any prominent part in the discussion of this subject ; and this all the less, that, as a general rule, he was accustomed and called upon to take a personally active share only in matters of a mixed ecclesiastical and political character.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV.

1. *De Civilis Dominio*, II., c. 5, MS. In Magna Carta, cui rex et magnates Angliae ex juramento obligantur, cap. 15, sic habetur : Nulla ecclesiastica persona—censum. This wording and numbering of the passage do not exactly correspond to those of the document now regarded as the original authority. Wyclif has a second reference to Magna Charta in the same chapter.

2. *De Civili Dominio*, I., c. 34.

3. *Life and Opinions of Wycliffe*, I., 262.

4. *John de Wycliffe*, a Monograph, 1853 ; p. 64, especially p. 87. Comp. also *Brit. Quart. Rev.*, 1858, October.

5. Woodford, 72 *Questiones de Sacramt. Altaris*; see above. Prof. Shirley is quite correct in maintaining in his edition of the *Fascic. Zizan.* XIII. that the view hitherto held upon this point of Wyclif's biography is an unfounded one.

6. A considerable portion of this tract, which is of the highest interest, was included by Lewis in the Appendix to his *Hist. of Wyclif*, No. 30. The text is unfortunately in a very imperfect condition, owing, in part at least, to the state of the MS. from which it was derived. But that the tract may have been written very soon after the May Parliament of 1366, and perhaps still earlier in that year rather than in 1367, is the impression which it leaves upon me as strongly as upon the editors of the Wyclif Bible, vol. I., p. vii., note 10, and Prof. Shirley, *Fasc. Ziz.* XVII., note 3.

7. As it has been used by Vaughan, *John de Wycliffe*, a Monograph, 1853, p. 105.

8. The latter fact had been already remarked upon by Vaughan in his earlier work, *Life and Opinions*, etc., I., p. 283.

9. The tribute amounted to 700 marks for England, and 300 for Ireland, making together the sum of 1000 marks usually given.

10. *In quodam concilio*. The Parliament is no doubt intended, but Wyclif designedly makes use of a general expression.

11. We would not say, with Boehringer, in his *Vorreformatoren*, I., Wycliffe p. 63, that the standpoint taken up by this lord was that of natural right, for there is certainly a distinction to be taken between natural right and the right of the strongest.

12. De Ruever Gronemann. *Diatribē in Joh. Wyclif Vitam.* Traj. ad Rhen., 1837, p. 93.

13. We entirely agree with Vaughan on this point, who, both in his earliest and latest works on Wyclif, considers the speeches of the lords to have been actually spoken in Parliament.

14. Vaughan, *Life and Opinions*, etc., I. 291, drew this conclusion from the

words in Wiclif's tract, *Quam audivi in quodam consilio a dominis secularibus*; but the words *esse datam*, used in connection with these, at once exclude this understanding of them.

15. The piece entitled *Modus tenendi Parliamentum*, dating according to recent investigations from before 1295, ed. Hardy, mentions, p. 5, that the bishops were to appoint for every archdeaconry two experienced men as representatives, *ad veniendum et interessendum ad Parliamentum*. Comp. Pauli, *Geschichte von England*, IV., p. 670, note 1.

16. Comp. Parry, *Parliaments and Councils of England*, Lond. 1839, p. 129.

17. *De Ecclesia*, c. 15. MS. 1294 of the Vienna Library, f. 178, col. 2. *Unde episcopus Roffensis dixit mihi in publico parlimamento stomachando spiritu, quod conclusiones meae sunt dampnatae, sicut testificatum est sibi de Curia per instrumentum notarii.* The words *dixit mihi* forbid us to understand that the Bishop had only spoken of him in his absence; rather he must have spoken to him and launched his charge against him face to face. Let me only add that the words *publicum parliamentum* do not pre-suppose *publicity* in the modern sense of the term, but only lay stress upon the circumstance that, instead of a private communication, the charge was made publicly in the hearing of many witnesses.

18. Si autem ego assererem talia contra regem meum, olim fuissent in parlimento dominorum Angliae ventilata, in Lewis, p. 350. According to the connection, the emphasis appears to lie not on *ego*, but upon *contra regem meum*.

19. Ego autem cum sim peculiaris regis clericus talis qualis, volo libenter induere habitum responsalis, etc., in Lewis, p. 349.

20. Lewis, 20; Vaughan, *Life*, I., 284; *John de Wycliffe*, 106; Shirley, *Fasc. Ziz. XIX.*; Björnström, *John Wicliſt*, Upsala, 1867, p. 36.

21. Boehringer, as above, p. 32.

22. Wiclif, *De Dominio Civili*, II., c. 1, Vieuna MS., No. 1341 (Dénis CCCLXXXII., not CCCLXXX. as Shirley gives it), f. 155, col. 1. Shirley has given the passage in the Introduction to *Fasc. Zizan.*, p. 21.

3. Comp. the signatures of all the King's ministers under the protocol on the oath taken by Arnold Garnier, in Appendix IV.

24. The royal passport is printed in Rymer's *Foedera*, ed. 4. London, 1830, vol. III., P. 2, f. 1007. The Pope's letter of introduction is printed by Lowth in the appendix of original documents to his life of Wykeham.

25. The textual form of the oath is printed in Norman French in Rymer, III., 2, 933. The Latin text was prefixed by Wiclif to the inquiry of which we are to speak immediately; and as the latter would not be intelligible without the former, I have also communicated the form of the oath in Appendix IV.

26. This paper, which has hitherto been known only by its title, is preserved in two MSS. of the Imperial Library of Vienna, namely, No. 1337 (Dénis, CCCLXXVIII.), f. 115, and No. 3929 (Dénis, CCCLXXXV.), f. 246. From the latter MS., which leaves much to be wished for in point of accuracy, I give in full, with the exception of a portion at the beginning, which is of inferior importance, in Appendix IV. The conclusion seems to have fallen away, for the text terminates in an etc.

27. Constat ex facto ejus notorie quod sic facit, Art 5. But that this memorial can not have been written before 1377 is clear from the circumstance that near its end reference is made to *regi nostro, licet in aetate juvenili florenti*, which can only apply to Richard II., not to Edward III., who died in June 1377.

28. *Ut a multis creditur—execucio sui officii—si non fallor, displiceret majori parti populi Anglicani; regnum nostrum jam sensibiliter percipiens illud gravamen de ipso conqueritur.*

29. Compare the first paragraph in Wiclif's Illustration of the Oath, near the end, in Appendix IV.

30. Compare the last paragraph of do.

31. *Cum dominus papa sit satis peccabilis.*

32. Walsingham, *Hist. Anglicana*, Ed. Riley, I., 316.

33. Boehringer, *Vorreformatoren*, I., 45, makes Guter Dean of Sechow, although in all England no town or any other place of residence so named exists. It is rather the city of Segovia, in Old Castile, that is meant. The English priest, John Guter, had no doubt obtained a Spanish prebend through the Duke of Lancaster, who, after the death of his first wife, Blanche of Lancaster, had married Constance, a daughter of Peter the Cruel, King of Castile, and afterwards put forward claims to the crown of Castile and Leon in her right. Compare John Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, Ed. Townsend, II., 916, App.

34. When Richard II. ascended the throne in 1377, Robert Belknappe was chief judge on the Bench of the Common Pleas, but was deposed in 1388, and banished to Ireland, for having set himself in opposition to the absolutistic designs of the King.—*Vide* Walsingham, Ed. Riley, II., 174; Knighton, 2694.

35. Rymer, *Foedera*, III., 2, f. 1007; Lewis, 304.

36. Under date 31st July he acknowledged receipt of 60 pounds 20 shillings per day paid to him out of the Royal Treasury for the costs of his journey and maintenance abroad. See Oxford edition of the Wiclif Bible, I., p. vii., note 13. It is a mere misunderstanding when Charles Werner, in his *History of Apologetic and Polemical Literature*, III., 1864, p. 560, speaks of Wiclif making a journey to Rome. He was never even in Avignon, to say nothing of Rome, where indeed he could have had no business to transact at this time, for it was not till 1377 that Gregory XI. left Avignon for Italy.

37. According to Barnes—*History of King Edward III.*, p. 866—referred to by Lewis, p. 33.

38. Pauli, *Geschichte von England*, IV., 487.

39. *Historia Anglicana*, Ed. Riley, I., 318.

40. Rymer, *Foedera*, vol. III., P. ii., fol. 1037.

41. *Hist. Anglic.*, I., 317.

42. *Quod bonum merito vocabatur*.—Walsingham, I., 324.

43. Considerable extracts from this petition, although not in a satisfactory arrangement, have fortunately been preserved, and were printed by Foxe in the *Acts and Monuments*, Ed. Townsend, II., 784. What Lewis communicated from other MS. is not free from errors.

44. I do not for a moment doubt that the Papal Collector here several times named was the same Arnold Garnier already known to us, for the description given of him by Parliament applies to Garnier in every particular of chief moment. He is a French subject, he has a head office in London, and has already been employed in London for a series of years. The only objection that can be taken is that Garnier's commission in England dated only from February 1372, so that in the spring of 1376 he had only been four years, not five, in the kingdom. But this difference is too small to shake the identity which I have assumed.

45. We had matter-of-fact proof of this above. After the death of Archbishop William Whittlesey, in 1374, Gregory XI. nominated the Bishop of London, Simon of Sudbury, to be Archbishop; the Bishop of Hereford, William Courtney, to be Bishop of London; and the Bishop of Bangor, John Gilbert, to be Bishop of Hereford. On this occasion, therefore, he translated at the least three bishops, and possessed himself of the first year's revenues of four newly-filled sees.

46. Edward III. succeeded to the crown after the dethronement of his father, Edward II., 25th January 1327. The year 1376 was therefore exactly the fiftieth of his long reign. It was a happy thought that the King's jubilee could not be better celebrated than by carrying out the necessary ecclesiastical reforms.

47. In May 1343.

48. Foxe, *Acts, etc.*, II., 789, from the royal archives.

49. Tit. 94. Against the usurpations of the Pope as being the cause of all the plagues, murrains, famine, and poverty of the realm. Comp. Tit. 100.

50. This must have been Thomas Trillek, who became Bishop of Rochester in 1363, and was still in office at the accession of Richard II., in 1377. Comp. Walsingham, *Hist. Anglic.*, I., 299, 332.

51. Lowth, *The Life of William of Wykeham*, p. 81. Pauli, *Geschichte von England*, 4, 489.

ADDITIONAL NOTE TO CHAPTER IV., BY THE TRANSLATOR.

ON THE LATE DATE AT WHICH WICLIF BEGAN HIS ATTACKS UPON THE MENDICANT ORDERS.

It is one of the most valuable contributions which Dr. Lechler has made to the biography of Wicklif that he has been able to produce from the Reformer's unpublished writings "direct proofs" of the fact "that Wicklif continued to speak of the Begging Orders with all respectful recognition during the twenty years which elapsed between 1360 and 1380, and that it was in connection with the controversy opened by him on the subject of Transubstantiation, and therefore after 1381 at the earliest, that he began to oppose himself to the Mendicants, who had come forward as his antagonists on that fundamental question."

I am happy to be able to bring forward an important testimony to the historical accuracy of this representation from the same contemporary source which was

laid under contribution in a previous note to chapter iii., viz., the *Chronicon Angliae* of the Monk of St. Alban's. At p. 116 occurs the following remarkable passage. Describing Wyclif, the hostile chronicler writes:—*Erat utique non solum facundus, sed simulator et hypocrita solidissimus, ad unum finem intendeus omnia, ut videlicet ejus fama et opinio se inter homines dilataret. Simulabatque se spernere temporalia tanquam instabilia et caduca, pro æternorum amore; et ideo non erat cum possessionatis ejus conversatio, sed ut magis plebis mentes deluderet, ordinibus adhaesit mendicantium, eorum paupertatem approbans, perfectionem extollens, ut magis falleret commune vulgus.*

The distinction here taken between Wyclif's bearing towards the *possessionati*, the "monk's possessioners," or the old endowed orders, with whom he had little or no familiarity, and his good opinion of the Mendicant Orders, with whom he cultivated personal intercourse, agrees exactly with the view taken by Professor Lechler, and is a weighty corroboration of its historical truth. This view, however, is of so recent a date, and the opposite view that Wyclif had begun as early as 1360 to take up the old quarrel of *Armachanus* with the Franciscans, has been so long received that it is not surprising that both Professor Shirley and Mr. Thompson have regarded this passage of the *Chronicon* as one which throws grave doubt on the authority or the accuracy of the compiler. Referring to the chapter on Wyclif as it stands in the old translation of the Chronicle from which he quotes, Shirley speaks of the single sentence which I have given above in the original as enough to set aside the authority of the whole chapter (*vide* p. 523 of the *Fasc. Zizan.*). This is the more unaccountable on his part, as he had previously remarked (Introduction, p. 14), that the "story which connects Wyclif with the controversies of 1360 is implicitly contradicted by contemporary authority, and receives, to say the least, no sanction whatever from the acknowledged writings of the Reformer;" that, in short, "it is a part of Wyclif's life only by courtesy and repetition." The editor of the *Chronicon Angliae* has naturally and justly a much higher respect for the authority of its author than Prof. Shirley, who had never seen it in its original text, but he is not a little embarrassed by the very statements about Wyclif, which, from Dr. Lechler's point of view, create no difficulty at all, but are welcome confirmations of historical truth. "It is curious to note," he remarks, in his *Introduction*, p. 53, "that our Chronicler, either from ignorance, or perhaps from a natural hostility to the Mendicant Orders, has represented Wycliff as a favourer of their views. It is, indeed, almost hopeless to account for such a glaring perversion of facts, otherwise than by an assumption of the writer's ignorance; and yet one hardly dares to allow such ignorance in a contemporary writer. His further statement that the Duke of Lancaster appointed four friars to plead Wycliff's cause at his trial may have some truth in it; and it is possible that this fact led him to assume that Wycliff was not now opposed to his former antagonists."

The discovery of the truth of the case by Dr. Lechler puts an end at once to all these embarrassments. It vindicates the accuracy of the *Chronicon*, as to the important point now before us; while the testimony of the *Chronicon* becomes a valuable corroboration of the biographical *datum* which Lechler has ascertained from the unpublished writings of Wyclif.

CHAPTER V.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE HIERARCHY AGAINST WICLIF IN 1377 AND 1378.

SECTION I.—*Wiclid Summoned before the Convocation.*

AT the very time when Wiclid stood in the highest estimation with his countrymen, and had reached a position of the greatest influence, a storm burst suddenly upon his head.

As a resolute, far-sighted, and experienced patriot, he possessed the confidence of the nation, as well as the favour of the King. Edward III. had already bestowed upon him more than one prebend, and what was still more important as a mark of his royal grace, had, as we have seen good reason to believe, repeatedly summoned him to serve in Parliament, as a man thoroughly conversant with ecclesiastical affairs. How the men of Oxford had previously distinguished him by office and honours, has been already related. After he had been Seneschal of Merton College, we have seen him in the position of Master of Balliol; and in 1361 this college nominated him to the parish of Fillingham. Seven years later he exchanged this parish for that of Ludgershall, in Buckinghamshire, for no other reason, doubtless, than that the latter was situated in the neighbourhood of the University. On 12th November 1368, Wiclid entered upon his pastoral charge at Ludgershall. In 1375 he obtained a prebend at Aust, a place romantically situated on

the south bank of the Severn, and connected with the endowed church of Westbury, near Bristol, where, in 1288, a foundation in honour of the Holy Trinity had been instituted for a dean and several canons.¹ It was not a parish church, but a chapel; the prebend was evidently regarded merely as a sinecure and place of honour, the holder being at liberty to appoint a substitute to read the masses required by the terms of the foundation. Wiclif however, seems to have resigned the prebend immediately after obtaining it, for in November of the same year, 1375, as appears from an entry in the rolls of the King's Chancery, the prebend was bestowed upon a certain Robert of Farrington.² *Fal loue to turn you on*

His nomination to the rectory of Lutterworth, in the county of Leicester, appears, from documentary evidence, to have been an expression of the royal favour. The patronage of this parish did not, indeed, belong properly to the Crown, but to the noble family of Ferrars of Groby, which was owner of the land. But as the heir, Lord Henry Ferrars, was still a minor, the right of collation to the existing vacancy devolved on the Crown, and the King presented John Wiclif in April 1374.³ We shall return to this subject in the sequel. We only remark further at present, that Wiclif appears to have immediately resigned his previous charge at Ludgershall, upon his being appointed to the Rectory of Lutterworth. At least, as early after that appointment as May 1376, a certain William Newbold is named as the parish priest of that village.⁴ On more than one occasion Wiclif expressed himself strongly enough on the subject of the pluralities which were held by many of the priests and prelates; and he had good reason for doing so. The abuse must have gone very far, when even a Pope

spoke of the accumulation of church-offices in one and the same person, as a mischief to the Church, as Urban V. did in a bull of May 1365; in consequence of which Papal censure, a sort of statistical inquiry was set on foot, by requiring of every beneficed man to make an official return to his Bishop of all the different church-livings which he held.

From such a return made to the Bishop of London by William Wykeham, afterwards Bishop of Winchester, but now Archdeacon of London, it appears that he was the holder of not fewer than twelve livings, some of them of very considerable value, while he was not in a position to serve one of these spiritual offices in his own person, being obliged to live continually at Court in the capacity of the King's private secretary.⁵ This single example speaks loudly enough of the state of things. Wiclif therefore was justified, as matters stood, in strongly censuring such an abuse; but still we should have been compelled to challenge his personal moral right to complain of it, if he had himself been guilty of what he censured in others. And doubtless his opponents, in this case, would not have spared to cast in his teeth the reproach, that he blamed in other men what he allowed in himself. But he never so acted. Never in any instance did he hold, at the same time, two places involving the cure of souls.

But all this disinterestedness could not protect him from the opposition of the hierarchy. In the course of a single year, 1377, he was twice summoned to appear before the spiritual tribunals; in the first instance, before Convocation, and in the second, before several prelates as commissioners of the Pope himself. His summons before Convocation is involved in much obscurity, with respect to its immediate occasion and the subjects on which he was

required to answer. We find nowhere any documentary information as to what doctrines of Wiclif were meant to be submitted to investigation before that tribunal. On the other hand, we have some information of the course which the proceedings took on the occasion of this appearance of Wiclif before his spiritual judges; and from these the conclusion is plain that the hostile step now taken against him was closely connected with the political partisanship of the day. The prelates were embittered against the Duke of Lancaster, who was labouring with all his might to put an end to their political influence. For the moment they were no match for him in the political arena; but all the more readily on this account they seized the opportunity of indirectly humbling him in the ecclesiastical province, in the person of a theologian who stood in intimate relations to his person. *See how they fly*

The Parliament opened on 27th January 1377. A few days later, on 3rd February, the Convocation—the clerical parliament—also met, and the Convocation summoned Wiclif before its tribunal. The Bishop of London, William Courtenay, was no doubt the instigator of this proceeding. He was a younger son of the Earl of Devonshire; a great grandson of Edward I. on the side of his grandmother; closely related to several families of the high nobility; and a man, besides, of imperious nature, and an arrogant, hierarchical spirit. He had been promoted, in 1375, from Hereford to the important see of London, and was a man of superior energy to his predecessor, Simon Sudbury, now Archbishop of Canterbury. The nobleman and the hierarch were united in him; and he represented in his own person the coalition of the nobility with the prelacy in opposing the ambitious designs of the Duke of Lancaster.

But in view of the fact that political rather than ecclesiastical motives had to do with the citation of Wiclif, the Duke considered it his imperative duty to afford him his powerful protection. He resolved to accompany him in person to the assembly of the prelates. On Thursday, 19th February 1377, the Convocation assembled in St. Paul's, and at Wiclif's side appeared the Duke of Lancaster and Lord Henry Percy, the Grand Marshall of England, followed by a band of armed men, and attended by several friends of the learned divine, in particular by five bachelors of divinity of the five Mendicant Orders, who, by the Duke's desire, were to stand forward in case of need as the advocates of Wiclif.⁶ The Lord Marshall led the way to clear a passage through the crowd for the Duke and Wiclif; but even with his aid it proved a difficult matter to get into the Cathedral and to press through the Church to the Lady Chapel where the bishops were assembled. This, of course, was not effected without a considerable amount of disturbance in the sacred building, upon which Courtenay declared to Lord Percy that if he had known beforehand the style in which he was going to play the master within the church, he would have barred his entrance. Whereupon the Duke of Lancaster answered the Bishop in a rage that he was resolved to be master there in spite of the bishops.

After much pushing and hustling they forced their way at last into the Chapel, where dukes and barons were seated with the Archbishop and other bishops. Here, then, stood Wiclif before his judges awaiting his examination — a tall, thin figure, covered with a long light gown of black colour, with a girdle about his body; the head, adorned with a full, flowing beard,

exhibiting features keen and sharply cut; the eye clear and penetrating; the lips firmly closed in token of resolution—the whole man wearing an aspect of lofty earnestness, and replete with dignity and character.⁷ *LIKE Lucy in thy sky*

The Grand Marshall now turned to Wiclif, and requested him to be seated. "He had need to rest himself, for he would have many questions to answer." "No!" exclaimed the Bishop of London, beside himself with rage, Wiclif must not be seated there; it was neither lawful nor becoming that when summoned to answer before his judges he should sit during his examination—he must stand. The dispute between them on this point became so violent as to end in the use of abusive language on both sides, by which the multitude of people who witnessed the scene were much disturbed. And now struck in the Duke, assailing the Bishop with angry words, and the Bishop paying him back in full with taunts and insults. The Duke finding himself overmatched in this line, passed to the use of threats, and declared that he would chastise not only the Bishop of London, but all the prelates of England for their arrogance. To Courtenay, in particular, he said: "You talk boastfully of your family, but they will be in no condition to help you; they will have enough ado to protect themselves." To which the Bishop replied, that if he might be bold enough to speak the truth, he placed his trust neither in his family nor in any other man, but singly and alone in God. Hereupon the Duke whispered to the person who stood nearest to him, that he would sooner drag the Bishop out of the Church by the bair of the head than put up with such an affront at his hand. But this was not spoken in so low a voice that several citizens of London did not overhear it. They were highly incensed,

and cried out that they would never consent to see their Bishop so shamefully handled ; they would rather lose their lives than he should be seized by the hair of the head.

As the business, before it was well commenced, had degenerated into a violent quarrel and tumult, the sitting of the Court was suspended before nine o'clock in the forenoon. The Duke and the Lord Marshall withdrew with Wiclif, without the latter having spoken a single word. But the citizens of London, who saw themselves insulted in the person of their Bishop, were still more enraged when, on the same day, a motion was made in Parliament that the government of the city should no longer be left in the hands of the Mayor, but should be handed over to a royal commissioner, the imprisoned Lord Latimer. Thus a menace to the municipal liberties and self-government of the capital was added to the affront done to their Bishop. No wonder that the wrath of the citizens found vent for itself in action as well as in word. On the following day they held a great meeting to deliberate upon the double wrong which had been done them—the imperilling of their autonomy, and the insult to their Bishop. At the same moment it came to their ears that the Lord Marshall had imprisoned one of the citizens in his own house in the heart of the city ; they rushed instantly to arms ; they stormed the house of the Marshall, and set at liberty their imprisoned fellow-citizen, and they searched the house through for Lord Percy himself. Not finding him there, they rushed off to the mansion of the Duke of Lancaster in the Savoy, where they thought they should find both the Lords. But they were a second time disappointed ; and to make amends, the crowd vented their rage partly upon a priest, whom they mortally wounded on their

way back to the city, and partly upon the armorial coat of the Duke, which they had pulled down from his palace in the Savoy, and now hung up in a public place of the city reversed, in token that the Duke was a traitor. They had even a design to demolish the Duke's palace, but Bishop Courtenay himself interposed, and entreated them to return to quietness and good order.⁸ The Princess of Wales, also, widow of the Black Prince, and mother of Richard the young heir to the throne, came forward to mediate between the Duke and the citizens, and a reconciliation was at length effected, in which the Duke consented that the Bishop of Winchester, who had been banished in disgrace from the Court, and Peter de la Mere, formerly Speaker of the House of Commons, who was still in prison, should be brought to trial before their peers; while on his side the Duke obtained the concession that the present Lord Mayor and Aldermen of the city should be replaced by others. And further, as the instigators of the riot, and the circulators of abusive rhymes against the Duke could not be found, it was agreed, in satisfaction of these wrongs, that a colossal wax candle should be bought at the expense of the city, and carried in solemn procession, with the Duke's arms attached to it, to St. Paul's, and there kindled before the image of the Virgin Mary.⁹ *I'm crying*

The citation of Wiclif before Convocation had thus ended in a manner quite unexpected. Wiclif himself had never opened his mouth. The incident seems to have passed away without affecting him personally in any way. But the scene which took place in the cathedral, and the popular uproar which resulted from it, brought the already high-pitched irritation between Lancaster and the English bishops to an open rupture, in which Wiclif was by no

means the chief person engaged. To Wiclif himself it must have been a source of sincere pain that he should have been the occasion of such a scene, and that, too, in a consecrated place. It would certainly have been more agreeable to him if he had been allowed to answer to the accusations which might have been laid against him. But who will hold *him* responsible for the fact that his person was made use of for ulterior objects, both by his enemies and his friends? In citing him before Convocation, the prelates wished to strike a blow, in his person, at the Duke. And the Duke took up the gauntlet as thrown down to him, and was glad to have found an opportunity of humbling the Bishop of London and the English prelates as a body. But when the citizens of London were exasperated against the Duke on account of his doings in St. Paul's, this was no proof that they were also opposed to the cause of Wiclif. Within less than a year afterwards, they espoused his interest in the most earnest way; but I am not disposed to lay stress upon that fact, as it might easily be attributed to the fickleness of the multitude. More weight is due to the circumstance that the sole cause which roused so powerfully the feelings of the citizens, was partly the heinous affront offered to their Bishop, and in part their alarm for the safety of their municipal rights and privileges; and neither the one nor the other of these causes of offence can with reason be laid to the blame of Wiclif.

SECTION II.—*Papal Bulls against Wiclif.*

If the citation of Wiclif before Convocation had been entirely without consequences for his own person, there was no abandonment of the designs of his church-adver-

saries against him, on that account. The political friends and patrons of the man, were too powerful to allow of the prelates carrying out their wishes for his humiliation ; they had recourse therefore to the Papal Court, in order to put him down by the right of the highest authority which existed in the Catholic Church. No doubt the first steps in this direction had already been taken some considerable time before. The occurrence in St. Paul's would now be a reason for pushing the matter to a more rapid decision. *Wake me! Shake me!*

Dont let me sleep too long!

Who were the principal accusers of Wiclif in Rome ? John Foxe's answer to the question is, that it was the English bishops who collected articles of his and sent them to Rome.¹⁰ But since Lewis's time it has been regarded as pretty well established that it was the monk party, and especially the Mendicant Orders, who appeared in the Curia against him.¹¹ We prefer to agree with Foxe. It is entirely due to a confounding of dates, when it is assumed that, so early as the period now before us, a controversy had already broken out between Wiclif and these Orders on the principles of Monachism. And even if this had been the case, it was not single Orders and their representatives who would have been recognised as competent public accusers in matters of doctrine, but only the bishops of the English Church. And we find, in point of fact, that Wiclif himself considered not the monks but the bishops as the parties who had pressed for a condemnation of his doctrine in Rome.¹²

The Anglican Episcopate, therefore, is, in our opinion, to be regarded as the prime mover of the proceedings of the Roman Court against Wiclif, as an alleged teacher of heresy ; and they took care to prepare and manage the

net in which they hoped to take him, with such skill and precaution, as to make sure that the man whom they dreaded, and who had hitherto been shielded by such powerful protectors, should not be able to escape. They had collected the requisite number of doctrinal propositions which Wiclif had publicly propounded, either in lectures and disputations delivered in the University, or in his published writings, and the dangerous tendency of which, menacing the well-being of Church and State, must, as they deemed, be manifest to every eye. But it was also of importance so to weave and intertwine the lines of the net, that the game should be snared, and finally secured. It seemed, too, that this difficult problem had been skilfully solved; for no fewer than five bulls were issued on one day, all aimed at one and the same point. On 22d May, 1377, Gregory XI., who had shortly before removed from Avignon to Italy, and on 17th January had made his solemn entry into Rome, put his hand to five Bulls against Wiclif in the magnificent Church of St. Maria Maggiore. One of the five, and that which appears to contain the essence of the whole number, is addressed to the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London.¹³ It conveys to the two prelates apostolic commission and plenary powers, first of all to ascertain, by private inquiry, whether the propositions contained in a schedule appended to the bull had been actually put forth by John Wiclif;¹⁴ and if this should be the case, then to cause him to be put in prison, and to be kept there until such time as they should receive further instructions from the Pope, to follow upon the report made to him of their proceedings.

A second bull contains only a supplement to the principal

bull.¹⁵ It is also directed to the Primate and the Bishop of London, and appoints what course should be taken in case Wiclif should get secret intelligence of the process with which he is threatened, and should save himself by flight from impending imprisonment. To meet this eventuality, the two prelates are commissioned and endowed with full apostolic powers to issue out a public citation to Wiclif to present himself in person before Gregory XI. within three months from the date of citation. A third bull, also addressed to the same prelates,¹⁶ requires them, either personally, or by theologians of unsuspected orthodoxy, to bring the condemned doctrines of Wiclif to the notice of King Edward, and his sons, the princes, as also the Princess of Wales, Johanna, the widow of the Black Prince, and other great personages of the realm, and privy councillors, to satisfy them of the erroneous character of these doctrines, and of the dangers which they threatened to the interests of the State; and thus to engage them to assist with all their might in rooting out these errors from the kingdom. The fourth bull, directed to the King himself, informed him of the commission relating to Wiclif, which had been conveyed to the Archbishop and the Bishop of London; and while warmly commending the zeal which he and his predecessors upon the throne had displayed for the Catholic faith, earnestly entreated and required him to extend his royal grace and assistance to the Archbishop and Bishop in the execution of their commission. Last of all, the fifth Bull is addressed to the Chancellor and the University of Oxford,¹⁸ to require of them in the most emphatic manner, and even upon pain of the loss of their privileges, not only to guard against the setting forth and maintaining of erroneous doctrines, but to commit Wiclif and his obstinate

followers to prison, and to deliver them over to the Pope's commissioners, the Archbishop and the Bishop of London.

The plan of operations, it is plain, had been ripely considered. The attainment of the end in view seemed to be assured, by the King and the royal princes, the Privy Council and the chief nobility, and the University of Oxford being all drawn into the interest of the Church. It was, therefore, to be expected that the Government, the power of the nobles, and the resources of so important a corporation as the University of Oxford, would contribute their aid to the two commissioners of the Roman Court to bring Wiclif under the Church's power. For that was the point aimed at. It was not meant that the Primate and Bishop Courtenay should conduct the investigation in chief against Wiclif, and pronounce judgment upon him. It was only a preliminary inquiry that was committed to them, viz., to satisfy themselves, in a manner entirely secret and confidential, that the theses communicated to them from Rome had really been put forward and maintained by Wiclif. But the process for heresy proper the Pope manifestly reserved for himself. It was a well-considered policy on the part of the Pope to make his appeal to England's sense of honour, in order to gain all parties having interest for the object in view. To the King he represented what high reputation both he and his ancestors and his kingdom had ever acquired by their piety and soundness in the faith. The University of Oxford must remember that its celebrated name is dishonoured when it looks on in inactivity, while tares are sown and grow up among the wheat in the field of renown committed to its care. Even the two bishops, whom Gregory entrusts with plenary powers, are not spared a word of admonition. They are reminded that the English

bishops of former times ever stood upon their watch tower, and took careful heed that no heresy should spread around them. But now-a-days such is the lack of watchfulness on the spot, that men in far distant Rome are aware of the secret devices and open attacks of the enemies of the Church, before any measures of defence against them have been taken in England itself. Further, it appeared to the Pope advisable to point out this fact to the bishops, that some of Wiclif's propositions appeared to agree in sense with the views of Marsilius of Padua and John of Jandun, whose book had already been condemned by Pope John XXII.

Let us now examine the condemned Articles themselves. They are nineteen in number, but they are not arranged in a strictly logical order. This, of course, is not Wiclif's fault, for it was not he who put them together as they appear in the schedule attached to the Papal bulls, but his opponents. The first five Theses were placed at the head of the whole number, with the calculated design that from the very first of the series the statesmen and nobles of the kingdom should receive the impression that Wiclif held revolutionary views, not only in Church matters, but also in political and municipal affairs, and even called in question the rights of private property and hereditary succession.. For in Theses 1-5 the subjects treated of have nothing to do with Church life, but refer exclusively to legal and municipal matters, such as property, right of possession, heritages, and so on. It has always, indeed, been assumed hitherto that the topic here spoken of is the temporal dominion of the Popes, and the political power and secular property of the Church in general. But this is not the fact; this is a view which rests entirely upon misunder-

standing and prejudice. Upon an unprejudiced examination it comes out with certainty that it is only municipal and legal relations which are here in question.¹⁹ Wiclif's proposition is, that all rights of inheritance and property are not to be considered as inherently unconditioned and absolute, but as dependent upon God's will and grace. Then in Nos. 6 and 7 he lays down the bold proposition, "In the event of the Church falling into error, or of churchmen persistently abusing the property of the Church, it is competent for kings and temporal rulers to withdraw from them, in a legal and moral manner, the temporal property."

However strongly the endowment may have been secured on the part of the founder, it is still, in the nature of things, necessarily a conditioned endowment, and one liable to be annulled by certain derelictions of duty. Whether the Church is or is not, in point of fact, in a condition of error, Wiclif will not himself inquire. He leaves it to princes to inform themselves upon that point; and in the event of the case being such, they may confidently proceed to take action —they are even bound under the pain of eternal damnation to withdraw, in this event, its temporalities from the Church. Allied to this, and only treated more as a question of principle, is the last Thesis, the 19th, where he maintains that "a man of the spirituality," even the Roman Pontiff himself, may lawfully be put right, and even be accused by his subjects and by laymen. The group of Theses, 8-15, is designed to guard against the abuse of the power of the keys, in binding and loosing, especially in so far as Church-discipline and the bann of excommunication should be used to secure certain revenues to the Church, and to deter the laity from meddling with Church property. In this sense Wiclif, in Thesis 14, contests the pretended absoluteness of the Pope's power of the

keys, and makes the effective power of the same dependent upon its being used in conformity with the Gospel.²⁰ At bottom it is only another form of the same thought when it is said (Thesis 9), "It is not possible for a man to be put under the bann unless he has before and principally been put under it by himself." In Nos. 10, 12, 13, Wiclif declares that only in God's matters, and not in matters of temporal goods and revenues, ought church censures to the extent of excommunication to be applied. With some appearance of isolation from the rest of the propositions, and yet in a certain degree of connection with the Thesis touching the power of the keys, stands, last of all, the 16th Thesis, which claims for every lawfully ordained priest the full power to dispense every sacrament, and consequently to impart to every penitent remission of all manner of sin.

The nineteen Theses, accordingly, in their chief substance, fall into three different groups. I. 1-5, concerning rights of property and inheritance. II. 6, 7, 17, 18, concerning Church property and its rightful secularisation in certain circumstances, to which No. 19 is a supplement. III. 8-15, concerning the power of Church discipline and its necessary limits, to which No. 16 also belongs. We shall fix our attention below upon the larger connections of thought from which these single Theses have been separated; but first we follow the course of external events.

SECTION III.—*First Effects of the Five Bulls in England.*

THE Papal bulls, which were based upon these nineteen Theses of Wiclif as the *corpus delicti*, were signed in Rome by Gregory XI., as before stated, on 22d May 1377; but it was an abnormally long time before they

were made public in England. Not till 18th December 1377 did the Pope's commissioners named in them—the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London—put their signatures to a missive to the Chancellor of the University of Oxford, enclosing the commission directed to him in the matter of Wiclif, which was seven months all but four days after the date of the Papal bulls. How is this delay to be explained? Possibly the bulls had been long detained on their way from Rome. But, as is now well known, the intercourse between Rome and England was at that time so constant, and, as a general rule, so rapid, that we cannot think it probable that the arrival of those documents had been really delayed by exceptional circumstances for more than half a year. No doubt they must have reached their destinations at a much earlier date. It was entirely the act of the Pope's commissioners themselves that the publication and the execution of their commission were so long delayed. Nor is it difficult to understand the reason why. These bulls of Gregory XI. arrived in England at a time when Edward III., given up by the physicians, was approaching his end. This state of matters was generally known in the kingdom; and on 21st June 1377 the aged monarch breathed his last at Shene.

The bull addressed to the King thus became inept; and yet without the help of the State, proceedings against Wiclif could not take the course which Rome desired. Besides, the weeks next ensuing, during which all public interest was engrossed by the change of the throne, the entry of the boy-King into London, and his solemn coronation as Richard II. in Westminster, were of all seasons the least appropriate for bringing before the public this present from Rome. Then, again, everything depended upon the spirit which was to

animate the Government during the King's minority, and upon the position which the regency should take up in relation to ecclesiastical affairs. To all this were added, in August, attacks of the French upon the south coasts of the kingdom, and threatening movements of the Scots in the north. In October, the first Parliament of Richard II. assembled, and in the House of Commons, at least, there prevailed so outspoken a feeling of antagonism to Rome, that it appeared every way advisable to wait till the prorogation of Parliament, which followed on 25th November, before measures were put in operation against Wiclif. As the most pressing business in this session of Parliament was the raising of supplies for the war, and above all, for the defence of the kingdom, the attention of the Legislature was once more drawn to the systematic draining of the country in behoof of the Roman Court and of foreign Church dignitaries, and to all questions besides which were connected therewith; the effect of which was, that the Commons addressed several petitions to the King, in which they renewed their complaints against the Papal provisions and reservations. They proposed to put a stop to these usurpations by which the *Convention* of 1374 between Gregory XI. and Edward was violated, by the enacting of severe penalties upon all persons who should obtain any Church office by the way of Papal provision, or who should rent from any foreigner land which was an English Church-fief. They proposed that from 2d January of the ensuing year, all foreigners alike, whether monks or seculars, should leave the kingdom, and that during the continuance of the war all their lands and properties in the country should be applied to war purposes. The income of French clergy alone, accruing from English livings, was estimated at 6000 pounds a-year.

In this Parliament also, the question of the right of the State was mooted and discussed with great earnestness of feeling. “Whether the kingdom of England, in case of need, for the purposes of self-defence, is not competent in law to restrain the treasure of the land from being carried off to foreign parts, although the Pope should demand this export of gold in virtue of the obedience due to him, and under the threat of Church censures.”

Upon this question, if we are rightly informed, Wiclif drew up, by command, an opinion for the young King and his great council. In that paper he gave a decided affirmative to the question, taking his stand partly upon the law of nature, in virtue of which every corporate body, and therefore also such an incorporation as the kingdom of England, possesses the power of resistance, in behoof of its own self-defence; partly upon “the law of the Gospel,” according to which all almsgiving (and into this all Church-property ultimately resolves itself), in case of necessity, ceases of itself to be a duty binding by the law of love. In support of which latter assertion, he appealed to several expressions of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, in his memorial to Pope Eugene III., *De Consideratione*.²¹ Herein Wiclif also lays stress upon considerations of what is due to the national welfare. If things go on as they have been doing hitherto, England must be impoverished, and her population decline, while the Curia, by the superfluity of wealth flowing in upon it, will become arrogant and profligate. The enemies of England, by means of her own gold, would be put in a position to make her feel the effects of their malice, while Englishmen would be laughed at by foreigners for their “asinine stupidity,” etc.²² Last of all, he appeals to the “Law of conscience;” making, in all, three different standards

of law (*lex naturæ*, *lex Scripturæ*, and *lex conscientiæ*). In the second part of the Opinion, he replies to the apprehension of dangers which might possibly arise from the adoption of the measures in question.

After the Parliament thus anti-Romish in its temper was prorogued, no obstacle any longer stood in the way, and it seemed now to be high time to carry out the Pope's commission, by taking steps against Wiclif.²³ Accordingly, under date 18th December, the two commissioners issued a mandate to the Chancellor of Oxford, in which the bull addressed to the University was enclosed. The mandate, which Edmund Stafford presented in person, was to this effect. 1. That the Chancellor, calling to his aid learned and orthodox doctors of Holy Scripture, should ascertain whether, as a matter of fact, John Wiclif had set forth the Theses in question, which were contained in the collection drawn up in Rome, and a schedule of which was appended. The result of this inquiry he was instructed to report to the commissaries in a sealed letter. 2. The Chancellor was to cite Wiclif to appear in thirty days after the opening of the citation before the Papal commissaries or their delegates in St. Paul's Church in London, there to answer concerning his Theses, and for the purpose of further procedure against him. Touching the steps which were taken in this direction by the Chancellor, the Commissaries expected to receive notice from him in an open letter.²⁴

Two things are worthy of remark in this mandate: first, its essential departure from the terms of the Papal bull. Gregory XI. had instructed his commissaries, as we have seen, that in the event of its being found that Wiclif had actually set forth the Theses in question, they were to cause him to be put in prison, and thereupon wait for further in-

structions from Rome. The mandate, on the contrary, says not a word about imprisonment, but only requires that Wiclif should be cited to present himself (upon the footing of a man at large) at the bar, and then, it is true, to await what was to follow. This is something quite different from the other. But the commissioners must have had very good reasons for departing from the stringent instructions which they had received. Doubtless they had convinced themselves that a prosecution of a man who was so highly considered at Court, as well as by the people, would be not only a dangerous measure, but, as matters stood, a matter of impossibility. And so they resolved at least to do something, and cited Wiclif to appear at their bar. Another thing in the mandate is worth consideration—the tone in which the commissioners address the Head of the University. Once and again they impress upon him his duty, from a motive of reverence and submission to the Holy See, punctually and faithfully to carry out the instructions which have been sent to him. This sounds suspiciously, and leaves the impression that they had some reason to stand in doubt beforehand of the good disposition of the University.

And, in point of fact, the upshot proved that the state of feeling in Oxford was entirely unfavourable to the object contemplated. Thomas Walsingham informs us with great displeasure that the men who were then at the head of the University hesitated long whether to receive the Papal bull with honour or to discard it with total disrespect. The chronicler pours out his feelings in an apostrophe to the University, in which he laments how deeply fallen she has become from her former height of wisdom and learning, seeing that now, under a dark cloud of ignorance, she was not ashamed to stand in doubt of things which could not be

doubted of even by a Christian layman.²⁵ The representatives of the University resisted, it appears, for some time the bull which Gregory himself had addressed to them. The case was different with the archiepiscopal Mandate which accompanied the bull, for in this nothing was required of them save an inquiry into the question of fact, whether such and such propositions had been actually set forth by Wiclif, and the citation of this man to appear before the episcopal tribunal. Neither of these requirements touched too nearly either the honour or the rights of the University. It was otherwise with the Papal bull. This reflected upon the honour of the University at its very outset, by sharply animadverting upon its remissness in opposing the erroneous doctrines which had been introduced into it. It appeared, besides, to be a proceeding injurious to the rights of the corporation, when it was required of them to make Wiclif a prisoner, and deliver him up to the commissioners, and to do the like with several of his followers if they should manifest any obstinacy in the way of resistance.

No wonder, if the heads of the University found it opposed to their dignity and even to their rights, that they should be called upon to play, so to speak, the part of constables who, at the bidding of a third party, were to be compelled to make prisoners of members of their own corporation, and deliver them over to a tribunal with which they had nothing to do. Even apart, however, from the formal and legal point of view, sympathy with Wiclif and esteem for his person were no doubt strong enough in Oxford circles (as the Pope himself presupposed) to have awakened an animated opposition to the Papal demand. What conclusion was taken in the end has not been expressly handed down to us; but there is no difficulty in conjecturing that the University conformed its action

to what was demanded in the more temperate mandate of the commissioners, and as much as possible passed over in silence the bull itself.

SECTION IV.—*The Process against Wiclit.*

By the mandate to the Chancellor, Wiclit was cited to appear in St. Paul's in London thirty days after the service of the citation. There appears to have been a subsequent adjournment to a later date, and to a different locality, viz., the Archbishop's palace of Lambeth. Many councils had been held in the chapel of this palace since the days of Anselm of Canterbury. There Wiclit was appointed to appear before the Pope's commissioners. When this took place cannot be exactly determined. The month of April 1378 has generally been assumed to have been the time, since Lewis attempted to fix this approximate date, which, however, he himself regards as uncertain.²⁶ And, in fact, we have rather to think of a date somewhat earlier, for, according to Walsingham's account, Gregory XI. must have been still alive at the time of this examination.²⁷ But Gregory died on 27th March 1378. It follows that the transaction must have taken place in March at latest, perhaps even in February of that year. If so, this date was not much later than the term for which Wiclit was originally summoned by the Chancellor of Oxford. Wiclit, without hesitation, presented himself before the Archbishop Simon Sudbury, and the Bishop of London, William Courtenay. The Duke of Lancaster, who had stood forward in St. Paul's as his defender, was no longer, since the change on the throne, in possession of ascendant influence. But Wiclit stood in no need even of this high protection. He possessed

courage enough to place himself, without it, before the commissioners of the Pope.

In defence of the nineteen Theses, condemned by the Curia as erroneous, he put in a written answer, in which he set forth the point of view from which he had proceeded in these Theses, and at once expounded and justified the sense of them, one by one.²⁸ This answer was meant to be communicated to the Pope himself. This was Wiclif's own intention, at least, as may be seen from the manuscript passage quoted in the note.²⁹ Meanwhile, however, the business of this occasion, as before, did not pass over entirely without disturbance. Sir Henry Clifford, an officer in the Court of the widowed Princess of Wales, appeared in the session, and demanded of the commissaries, in name of the Princess, that they should abstain from pronouncing any final judgment respecting the accused. Citizens of London, too, forced a passage into the chapel, and loudly and menacingly took part with the theologian, who was a patriot so much beloved and honoured. This double intimidation, from above and from beneath, the spiritual tribunal was unable to withstand. To save appearances, at least, Wiclif was prohibited any longer to deliver in lectures and sermons the Theses in question, because, as was pretended, they would give offence to the laity (not, therefore, because they were in themselves erroneous; such was the impression it would seem which was made by his defence). He was allowed, however, to leave the tribunal as free as he had appeared before it, quite contrary to the intentions which had been conceived in Rome, and directly in the teeth of the instructions which had been given to the commissaries.

No wonder that the zealous adherents of Rome were

displeased in the highest degree with this result of the process. We have still a lively echo of this feeling in the utterances of the chronicler Walsingham on the subject. In great wrath he pours himself forth against the glorious boastings with which the prelates began the business, and against the fear of man with which they closed it. When they were appointed the Pope's commissioners against Wiclif, they had declared, in the fulness of their courage, that by no entreaties of men, by no threats or bribes, would they allow themselves to be drawn aside from the line of strict justice in this affair, even if their own lives should be menaced. But on the very day of hearing, for fear of the wind which blew the reed hither and thither, their words had become smoother than oil, to the public humiliation of their own dignity and to the loss and prejudice of the whole Church. Men who had vowed not to bend to the princes and peers of the realm till they had punished the arch-heretic for his extravagances, are seized with such terror at sight of a certain knight of the Court of Princess Joanna, that one would have supposed that they had no horns on their mitres more; when “they became as one that hearth not, and who has no word to say against it in his mouth” (Ps. xxxviii. 15). And so the crafty hypocrite, by his written defence of those godless Theses of his, had the better of his judges, and got clear off.³⁰

Thus, then, was a second attack upon Wiclif happily repelled. The first had been an independent attempt of the English Episcopate; the second had proceeded from the central power of Rome itself, whose organs for this occasion were two English prelates. But on the first occasion a prince of the blood had made use of his influence in the Government to thwart, in a violent way, the design of

the prelates. On the second occasion, a powerful sympathy from different circles in the country served as a shield to cover the bold Reformer; the learned Corporation of Oxford bestirred themselves to guard in his person their own autonomy; the mother of the young King put in a powerful word for him; and the burghers of London, in a tumultuary manner, manifested their sympathy with the honoured patriot. We see how widely among the higher and lower strata of the population, esteem for Wiclif and the influence of his spirit were then diffused. It is true that, in the Chapel of Lambeth, the Papal commissaries formally prohibited him any more to publish in the pulpit or in the chair the doctrine condemned by the Pope. But no formal promise was given by Wiclif to that effect; and should he resolve to persevere in his own path, in spite of this prohibition, the prelates were destitute of power to arrest his progress.

But all these considerations apart, the relations of the Western Church at large were assuming such a form just at this time, that an earnest and free spirit like Wiclif could only be set on fire still more to press for reformation with all his strength. For not long after the trial in Lambeth, Gregory XI. died (27th March, 1378); and a few months later was developed that great and long continued Papal schism which exercised an influence of the greatest importance upon Wiclif's inner and outer life.³¹ Thus the year 1378 forms a turning point in his career. A storm which menaced his safety had been turned aside, and on this occasion it had been brought to light how many hearts were beating in sympathy with him and his efforts. Then befell the great church schism which shook violently the moral prestige of the Roman Church, so far as it has

any such still remaining, paralysed its power, and put a spur into every good man to do his utmost to help the necessities of the case, and to raise up again the fallen Church. It is easy to understand that Wiclf, after having applied himself till now, preponderantly, to matters of mixed ecclesiastical and political interest, should from henceforth devote himself to interests of a purely ecclesiastical kind, without of course renouncing the character of the patriot. From that time he first stood forward in the specific character of a Church Reformer.

NOTES TO CHAPTER V.

1. Vaughan states that it was the King who presented him to this prebend, but all that is certain, from documentary evidence, is that Edward III. confirmed the nomination, 6th November 1375.

2. *Rotuli patentes* 49, Edw. III., 1, M. 11. Wiclif Bible, Pref. vii.

3. That this was the history of the affair is made certain by an entry in the register of the see of Lincoln, in the place where it records the nomination of Wiclif's successor in the rectory. On this occasion Lord Henry Ferrars exercised personally his patronate right; and it was stated at the same time that the last preceding nomination had been made by King Edward, by reason of the minority of Lord Ferrars. *Vide* entry in Lewis, p. 44, with note; and in Vaughan, *Monograph*, p. 180, with note.

4. According to entry in the *Registrum Bokyngham* of Lincoln.

5. Lowth, *Life of William of Wykeham*, p. 31.

6. This last circumstance Foxe (*Acts and Monuments*, II., p. 800, ed. Townsend) takes from the MS. chronicle of a monk of St. Albans, which was lent to him by Archbishop Parker, and from which he derived the whole detailed account of the incident. More recent writers passed over the circumstance in silence, after Lewis had maintained that it is in the highest degree improbable that the Mendicant Friars should have undertaken the defence of a man who had exposed their superstitions and immoral practices. But this last assumption touching Wiclif's relations at this date to the friars rests upon error. And we have no good reason to doubt the fact as stated by Foxe, especially as he does not say that Wiclif himself had associated these four friars with him for his defence, but that the Duke had required them to accompany him to the tribunal; and of Lancaster it is well known that he was as pronounced a friend of the Mendicant Orders as he was a sworn enemy of the prelates.

7. This description of the personal appearance of Wiclif is taken from several portraits of undoubted originality still existing, all agreeing in the main. The portrait which is prefixed to Lewis's life was engraved from a picture in possession of the Earl of Denbigh. That given by Vaughan in both forms of his work was taken from the portrait which belongs as an heir-loom to the parsonage of the village of Wiclif in Yorkshire. More recently (1851) a remarkable portrait has been brought to light, which is in the possession of a family named Payne, in Leicester, which is a sort of palimpsest; for the original picture, which is a portrait of Wiclif, and seems to have been produced in the fifteenth century, was painted over before the Reformation and converted into a likeness of a Dr. Robert Langton, of whom

nothing is known. But the original picture has been detected under the second, and this represents Wiclif as a somewhat younger man, and with fuller and firmer features than he is represented withal in the other portraits. Comp. Vaughan's article "Wycliffe" in the *British Quarterly Review*, October 1858.

8. *Walsingham*, I., 325.
9. *Foxe, Acts and Monuments*, II., 804. Comp. *Walsingham*, I., 325.
10. *Acts and Monuments*, III., 4.
11. *Lewis*, 46; *Shirley, Fasc. Ziz.*, XXVII.; *Böhringher, Wycliffe*, 53.
12. *De Ecclesia*, c. 15; *Vienna MS.*, 1294, f. 178, col. 2.
13. *Walsingham*, I., 350; *Lewis, Appendix*, 15; *Vaughan, Life and Opinions*, I., 429.
14. *Walsingham*, I., 353; *Lewis*, 316, No. 18; *Vaughan, Life*, etc., I., 457.
15. *Walsingham*, I., 348; *Lewis*, 308, No. 14. "Nuper per nos, etc."
16. "Super periculosis admodum erroribus," etc., *Walsingham*, I., 347; *Lewis*, 307, No. 13; *Vaughan, Life*, etc., I., 427.
17. *Regnum Angliae quod Altissimus*, etc. *Walsingham*, I., 352; *Lewis*, 312, No. 16; *Vaughan, Life*, etc., I., 430.
18. "Mirari cogimur et dolere," etc. *Walsingham*, I., 346; *Lewis*, 305, No. 12; *Vaughan, Life*, etc., I., 425; *Shirley, Fasc. Ziz.*, 242. That the date given in this document (30th May 1376) is false, was discovered by Shirley; *vide* Introduction, xxviii., note I., after having declared his preference for A.D. 1377, at p. 244, note 17, in the body of his work.
19. Lewis set the example of referring these articles to ecclesiastical property and jurisdiction, p. 46, and he is followed in this by Vaughan and all later writers. The error attached itself to the words in the first article, *Petrus et omne genus suum*—words which it was thought could only be understood of the Apostle Peter and his successors in the Roman See. But to say nothing of the extreme strangeness of using the word *genus* for *successores*, Wiclif often makes use, in his unprinted works, of the name Petrus, as also of the praenomens Caius, Titus, etc., in the way of example. But quite decisive of the point is the fact that in the book, *De Civilis Dominio*, I., c. 35, from which I am convinced the article was taken, the connection clearly and necessarily leads to the *general* sense which I have indicated.
20. No. 15. *Credere debemus, quod solum tunc solvit vel ligat (sc Papa) quando se conformat legi Christi.*
21. Foxe has incorporated an extract from this memorial with his work, as well in its Latin as its English form. *Acts and Monuments*, III., 54. The complete original is found in MS. in a volume made up of several pieces, in the Bodleian, from which it has been published by Shirley in the *Fasc. Zizan.* He has compared with it a second copy, which is found in one of the Vienna Wiclif MSS. (Dénis, 358, now numbered 1337, f. 175). The title of it in the Oxford MS. is, *Responsio Magistri Joannis Wycliff ad dubium infra scriptum quaesitum ab eo per Dominum regem Anglie Ricardum secundum, et magnum suum Concilium, anno regni sui primo.*
22. Shirley, *Fasc. Zizan.*, 263.

23. That the commissioners had at their own instance delayed the execution of the Papal commission, which appears to have reached their hands in due time, is evidently presumed by Walsingham when he says, "How disrespectfully, how negligently they acted in executing their commission, is better past over in silence than expressed." *Hist. Angl.*, ed. Riley, I., 356.

24. The mandate is printed by Lewis in his Appendix, No. 17, p. 314, as also in Wilkins' *Concilia Magnae Britanniae*, III., p. 123; only in the latter the date given is V Cal. Januarii., instead of XV Cal., i.e., 28th December, instead of 18th December. This is the solution of the discrepancy remarked upon by Hoeffler, in his *Anna von Luxemburg*, p. 53, note 3.

25. Walsingham, *Hist. Anglic.*, I., 345.

26. *Life of John Wyclif*, p. 58.

27. Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.*, I., 356, says in reference to the upshot of the transaction, "Wyclif escaped, amplius non compariturus coram dictis episcopis, citra mortem Gregorii Papae."

28. This short "Defence" is incorporated by Walsingham in his Chronicle, I., 357-363. It is also given by Lewis in his Appendix, No. 40, p. 382; and by Vaughan, *Life*, etc., I., 432. In the Chronicler its title is *Declarationes*; in Lewis, *Protestatio*. I find that Wyclif himself in his work *De Veritate S. Scripturae*, c. 14, f. 40, col. 4 (Vienna MS., 1294) gives to this piece the latter title, *Protestatio*. Another justification of the same nineteen articles, differing in point of form, and bearing to have been presented to the Parliament, is given by Shirley, *Fasc. Zizan.*, p. 245.

29. Walsingham, I., 356; comp. 362. We may here find a place for the remark that the two examinations of Wyclif before the English prelates, treated of in this chapter, have not always been rightly viewed by historians. Foxe, indeed, in the sixteenth century, and his Romish contemporary, Nicolas Harpsfield, placed the examinations in St. Paul's in the days of Edward III., and at a time antecedent to the appearance of the five Papal bulls. They follow, in this point, the account of Walsingham (which, however, is not entirely consistent with itself), and of other chroniclers of the period between Wyclif and the Reformation. But Lewis, pp. 46, 56, assumed that both the examinations, at St. Paul's and at Lambeth, took place in consequence of the Papal bulls, and not before, and that not only the later, but the first also took place under Richard II., after King Edward's death. He was followed in this not only by Mosheim, Schröckh, Gieseler, and Neander, but also by English scholars, such as Lowth, Baber, and a writer in the *Westminster Review*, 1854. The last-named author believed that he was able to bring positive proof that Walsingham must have been in error when he placed the appearance of Wyclif at St. Paul's at the beginning of 1377, instead of the year 1378. But Vaughan in the *Life*, etc., I., 357, note 23, 2 edit., has proved, by weighty arguments, that that event took place as early as 1377 (19th February), and that the Papal bulls were not issued till a later date, so that the event cannot have been a consequence of the bulls, but much rather the occasion of their issue on 22d May 1377. To Vaughan, undoubtedly, belongs the merit of having placed this subject in a clear light, both chronologically and pragmatically. The following facts are decisive in support of

this view :—1. The popular tumult in London directed against the Duke of Lancaster and Marshall Percy, which was undoubtedly a consequence of what occurred in St. Paul's, is always and persistently placed in the year 1337, and not in the year following, 1378. 2. Lord Percy, in the beginning of 1378, was no longer Marshall, but in 1377 he was, without doubt, invested with this dignity. 3. The day of the week which is assigned by the English contemporary chronicler, viz., Thursday before the Feast of St. Peter's, 19th February, corresponds with this day of the month only in the year 1377, but not in the year 1378.

30. The Chronicler of St. Alban's appears to have felt this himself, when he says of Gregory XI.'s death, “*Cujus obitus non modicum fideles contristavit sed in fide falsos, ipsum Johannem (Wiclif) et ipsius asseclas, animarit.*” Walsingham, I., 356.

CHAPTER VI.

WICLIF AS A PREACHER; HIS EFFORTS FOR REFORM IN
PREACHING AND FOR THE ELEVATION OF THE PASTORAL
OFFICE.

SECTION I.—*Wiclif as a Preacher; his Homiletical Principles.*

WICLIF not only made use of scientific lectures from his chair in Oxford, nor only of learned works and small fugitive tracts; he also availed himself of preaching as a means of battling with the evils which he saw in the religious condition of the National Church, of implanting sound Christian life, and of thus serving, according to his ability, the interests of his Church and people.

It is characteristic of the man and his way of acting, that in this extremely important matter he commenced by doing his duty at his own personal post, from which he afterwards extended his influence to wider circles.

This comes out with the greatest clearness from his remaining sermons, for these divide themselves into two great groups—the Latin sermons and the English. The latter are partly sermons which he may be presumed to have preached to his congregation at Lutterworth, as parish priest, and partly outlines of sermons which he prepared as a kind of model for itinerant preachers of his school; we shall return to these in the sequel. The Latin sermons were, without doubt, delivered in Oxford before the University, perhaps in St. Mary's.¹ This is antecedently pro-

bable, but it is also manifest from the form and contents of the sermons themselves. Not unfrequently we find learned matters mentioned in them in a way which makes it certain that the audience must have consisted of people of culture and scholastic learning—as, for example, when, in the first of the “Miscellaneous Sermons,” he speaks of the manifold varieties then received of the sense of Scripture, and, in particular, of the *sensus tropologicus* and *anagogicus*; when quotations are introduced, not only from the Fathers, but from the Canon Law; and when abstract questions of logic and metaphysics are investigated, such as that which refers to the relation of soul and body, etc. What sort of audience must a preacher have before him when he speaks of the imitation of Christ, as Wiclf does in the third of his Sermons for Saints’ Days, and asks, What does it help us in the imitation of Christ to pore over the pages of the logicians? or what aid comes from the knowledge of the natural philosophers acquired at such a cost of labour? or from the well-known method of reasoning adopted by the mathematicians? Plainly the preacher has people of learning before him—the professors and students of the University. This was long ago correctly noted by a reader of the Vienna manuscript of these sermons, who writes on the margin, opposite this passage, the words, “*Magistri et studentes notate.*”² The preacher, in fact, in one instance mentions Oxford by name;³ and one of his sermons from beginning to end is simply an address delivered on occasion of a Doctoral promotion in the University.⁴

The Latin sermons of Wiclf known to us belong to very different years, as may be gathered with tolerable certainty from several internal marks. The most of these collections, indeed, belong to the latest years of his life, but one of

them, containing forty miscellaneous sermons, consists of earlier discourses, all delivered before the year 1378,⁵ and these are all instructive and valuable for the insight they give into the course of Wiclid's development. At present we say nothing of what is to be learned from this source of the progress of his mind in the matter of doctrine; we confine ourselves, in the meantime, to what we have been able to gather from it with respect to the views he took of the object of preaching, and of the actual condition of the preacher's office at that period.

In the last named collection of Latin sermons, belonging to the period of his academic life and work, he expresses himself in different places on the subject of preachers and preaching. Two sermons in particular—those on Luke viii. 4-15, the Parable of the Sower—the Gospel of the Day for Sexagesima Sunday—supply us with important information as to his views on this point.⁶

Before everything else Wiclid holds up the truth that the preaching of the Word of God is that function which subserves, in a degree quite peculiar to itself, the edification of the Church; and this is so, because the Word of God is a seed (Luke viii. 11, "The seed is the Word of God"). In reflecting upon this truth, he is filled with wonder, and exclaims, "O marvellous power of the Divine Seed! which overpowers strong men in arms, softens hard hearts, and renews and changes into divine men, men who had been brutalised by sins, and departed infinitely far from God. Obviously such a high morality could never be worked by the word of a priest, if the Spirit of Life and the Eternal Word did not, above all things else, work with it."

But the grander and more exalted the view which Wiclid takes of the preacher's office, so much the more has he an

open eye for the faults and deficiencies of the actual average preacher of his own time. As the worst of these, he censures the evil practice of not preaching God's Word, but setting forth stories, fables, or poems, which were altogether foreign to the Bible. He refers again and again to this subject in sermons both of his earlier and later years, as well as in treatises and tracts.⁷ We have no ground to assume that sermons of the kind he censures were not preached upon some Bible text. It is rather to be supposed that the preachers, after giving out a text from the Scripture for form's sake, were none the less accustomed to draw the main contents of their sermons from other sources. There were not even wanting instances of preachers who were bold enough to dispense with a Scripture text, and to choose something else. Even an Archbishop of Canterbury, and a learned scholastic and cardinal, Stephan Langton, †1228, saw nothing offensive in taking for the text of a short Latin sermon which still exists, a dancing-song in old French, allegorically applying, indeed, "the Fair Alice," and all that is said of her, to the Holy Virgin.⁸ Things of this sort, however, may have been of comparatively rare occurrence; but in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries it had become almost a prevailing pulpit-fashion, instead of opening up Bible thoughts, and applying them to life, to draw the materials of sermons from civil and natural history, from the legendary stores of the Church, and even from the fable-world of the middle ages, and the mythology of the heathen gods. If a priest, on a Saint's Day, recounted the miracles of the saint as set out in his legend, this had still some claim to be listened to as a piece of sacred history. But the *Gesta Romanorum*, and all manner of tales and fables, taken from profane sources like Ovid's *Metamorphoses*,⁹ were made

use of by preachers, if not for the edification, at least for the entertainment of their hearers.

The taste for allegorical interpretations and applications, as these gradually came into general use, helped men over every objection to the practice, and the craving for entertainment of this description grew always the stronger the less preachers were able to supply the souls of men with wholesome refreshment from the eternal fountain of the Word of God. No wonder that sermons often became a web whose woof and weft consisted of all other threads save those of Bible truth. And it was precisely those men of the fourteenth century who were specially trained for the work of popular preaching—namely the Dominicans and the Franciscans—who humoured the corrupt taste of the time, and flavoured their pulpit addresses with such stories and buffooneries. If the multitude were amused for the moment, and the begging friar who tickled their ears got his reward of a collection,¹⁰ the end aimed at was gained, and the Penny-Preacher (as Brother Berthold of Regensburg, as early as the thirteenth century, calls this set of preachers) could go on his way rejoicing.

It is nothing wonderful that even Catholic literary historians, like the learned continuators of the *Histoire littéraire de la France*, condemn a style of pulpit eloquence such as this; or that even in the beginning of last century a Dominican like the learned Jakob Eckard, pronounced the stories with which the brethren of his Order were accustomed to amuse their audiences, to be “stale and absurd.”¹¹ But if a contemporary like Wiclif was able to see these serious evils in their true light, and condemned them in so decided a tone, we have here a proof that his judgment had been enlightened and sharpened by the Word of God; and all the

more so that he was himself a large sharer in many of the pulpit faults of his own time in other respects.

The second objection which he took to the prevailing pulpit fashion of his age, was that even when the Word of God was preached this was not done in the right way. Preachers were in the habit of breaking down the Bible-thoughts into the smallest and finest particles, and of making moral applications of them in a style so loaded with ornaments of all kinds, including even the use of rhyme, that the language of Scripture was thrust into the background, and the language of the preacher came alone to be regarded, as if he were himself the author and discoverer of God's truth. This practice, he remarks, comes from nothing else but the pride of men, every one seeking his own honour, every one preaching only himself and not Jesus Christ (2 Cor. iv. 5). On all such preaching Wiclif pronounced the judgment that it is a dead word, and not the word of our Lord Jesus Christ—not the word of eternal life (John vi. 68). And it was this prevailing want of the true seed of the word of life which was to blame, in his view, for the spiritual deadness of the people, and for the wickedness which, as the fruit of this deadness, prevailed in the world.

These were weighty truths, having a bearing much wider than a mere reform of preaching, and looking in the direction of a reformation of the Church at large, yea of a regeneration of Christendom from the life-seed of the Word of God. Meanwhile, let us limit ourselves to the pulpit, and take a close view of the strictures which Wiclif makes on the prevalent preaching of his time. Even in cases where God's Word is preached, and not matters of quite another kind, he censures, as already remarked, the manner in which this is done, and what he disapproves of is

twofold—first, the scholastic form of preaching; and next, its rhetorical ornamentation.¹²

As to the former, Wiclif takes notice of the method of endless logical distinctions and divisions.¹³ This practice had found its way into the pulpits from the lecture rooms of the scholastics. It was connected with the whole dialectic habit of the middle age, a habit which appeared in frequent definitions, hair-splitting divisions and sub-divisions, and in endless syllogistic processes of proof. Hence arose a series of treatises on Method, in particular of helps to the preparation of sermons; e.g., a treatise by an anonymous author of the year 1390, under the title of *The Art of making Sermons*, in which the syllogism is held up as the ground form to which everything else is to be reduced.

As to the other point, the rhetorical and poetical ornament with which preachers thought they were bound to set off their sermons, Wiclif repeatedly returns to it.¹⁴ He goes into this subject so minutely as to enumerate and set in their true light the grounds upon which men sought to excuse if not to justify the practice, in order to bring into the light the self-conceit which lay at the bottom of it, and to warn preachers against it.

The first ground which was alleged in support of the practice was that there was a necessity to give up the old style of preaching and introduce a new one, otherwise there would be no longer any difference between a thoroughly-schooled divine and a poorly-educated priest of the middling sort. To this ground Wiclif allows no weight whatever. It savours, he justly remarks, of nothing else but vain glory, and a desire to take precedence of others. “Not so beloved. Let us rather follow the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was humble enough to confess, ‘My doctrine is

not mine, but the Father's who sent me. He who speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory.'"

The second ground upon which men took their stand was this: every subject treated of must have a form answerable to itself. Now, theology is the most perfect of all subjects. It behoves, therefore, to be clothed in the most honourable and beautiful form, and that is the dress of oratory and poetry. Wisdom only becomes perfect when it is set off with eloquence. But to these ideas Wiclif opposes himself in the most decided manner. This ornamental speech upon which men so plume themselves is so little in keeping with the subject of God's Word that the latter is corrupted by it, and its power paralysed for the conversion and regeneration of souls. God's Word, according to Augustin, has a peculiar and incomparable eloquence of its own, with all its simplicity and modesty of form.

The third ground relied upon was an appeal to the poetical form of several books of the Old Testament, from which it was argued that it is the duty of a theologian to be guided by this precedent, especially as poetry has a charm of its own, and is further of advantage for helping the memory. To which Wiclif replies—“It is one thing to sing a spiritual song and another to speak a word of warning. The measure of verse has, it is true, a certain charm, but only a sensuous charm, which rather draws off the soul of the hearer from the spiritual and eternal subject of discourse, and destroys his taste for spiritual nourishment.”

How sound and good, and worthy of being laid to heart even at the present day, these thoughts of Wiclif are, it is hardly necessary for us to point out at any length. But his criticism has a positive as well as a negative side, and bears

upon both the two questions which have here to be distinguished—what to preach, and how to preach it. To the first he replies, as what precedes shows, it is God's Word that should be preached, for God's Word is the bread of souls, the indispensable, wholesome bread; and therefore, he thinks, to feed the flock, in a spiritual sense, without Bible truth, is the same thing as if one were to prepare for another a bodily meal without bread.¹⁵ God's Word is the life-seed which begets regeneration and spiritual life.¹⁶ Now, the chief business of a preacher is to beget and to nourish up members of the Church.¹⁷ Therefore it is God's Word he must preach; then only will he succeed in these aims. This was why the Church of Christ grew so mighty when the Gospel was preached by the Apostles, whereas at the present day the Church is continually decreasing for the want of this spiritual seed.¹⁸ If the prophets of the Old Testament preface their prophecies with "Thus saith the Lord," and if the Apostles proclaim the Word of the Lord, so must we too preach God's Word and proclaim the Gospel according to the Scriptures.¹⁹ There is one point in particular to which Wiclif draws attention—that believing Christian men, who are really preaching the Gospel, must necessarily give the first place to the preaching of the Gospel *history*, for in that holy history lies the faith of the Church, which the congregation is bound to learn and know.²⁰ "The priests learn and teach holy Scripture for this purpose, that the Church may learn to know the walk of Christ, and may be led to love Christ himself."²¹

To the question, How ought the Word of God to be preached? Wiclif replies in general terms, that the truth which edifies ought to be uttered aptly. Of course this taken alone does not amount to much. Coming close to the

subject, he calls to his aid the general rule, that every mean subservient to an end is so much the better adapted to that end, the shorter and completer the way is in which it leads to it (*compendiosius et copiosius*). As now the sowing of God's Word is the appointed mean for the glory of God and the edification of our neighbour, it is plain that the sowing is all the more aptly done the more shortly and completely it fulfils that end. But, without doubt, this is the case with a plain and simple mode of address (*plana locutio*), and this mode is therefore that which ought to be made choice of.²² In another place Wiclit expresses his preference for a humble and homely proclamation of the Gospel, and by this he no doubt meant nothing else than this plainness and simplicity of language. And he proceeds on the same principle when he remarks—"It was because a flowery and captivating style of address cannot fail to be of little account wherever the right substance of preaching is present, that Christ promises to His disciples (Matt. x. 19) no more than that it would be given to them *what* they should say. The *how* must then follow in a manner suitable to the *what*".²³ That the *admonitions* which occur in a sermon should be suitable to the state of the audience is a self-evident deduction from the same principle. The utterance given to the truth ought to be apposite and fitting (*apte loqui veritatem*). Only one thing must never on any account be wanting—genuine devout feeling—the *fidelis sermonis ministratio*—from which everything in the sermon is the outcome. "If the soul is not in tune with the words, how can the words have power? If thou hast no love, thou art sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal."²⁴ Still there is nothing inconsistent with this in the requirement that the preacher should use sharpness of speech (*acuti sermones*) upon proper occasions. Wiclit re-

marks that it must not be supposed that sharpness includes in it malice or ill-feeling. Christ contended sharply with the Pharisees, but he did so out of a pious heart and from love to the Church.²⁵ His last observation on the subject is the crowning one, that “in every proclamation of the Gospel the true teacher must address himself to the heart, so as to flash the light into the spirit of the hearer, and to bend his will into obedience to the truth.”²⁶

Such are the positive requirements which Wiclif lays down for preaching and preachers. Let us see how far he complied with them himself as a preacher, taking into view his Latin as well as his English sermons.²⁹ *What* does he preach? He will preach God's Word, not man's; not worldly things will he preach, but the saving truth. This is what we feel to be his spirit everywhere. That he always takes his texts from the Bible, either from the Church lessons or freely chosen texts, according to circumstances, is a matter of slight importance. But he is also fond of connecting one Bible text with another—one lesson for the day with another, *e.g.*, to combine one Sunday Gospel with the Gospel for the preceding Sunday, or with the epistle for the same; and while doing so, he dwells with admiration upon the excellencies of the Word of God, as when he observes in one place, that Scripture truths stand in such an intimate connection with each other, that every one of them lends support to every other, and all of them unite in the revelation of God.³⁰

Further, in all cases where he pronounces a judgment upon any doctrine which is before him, or upon any ecclesiastical custom and institution, it is always the Bible which he employs as the standard. He goes back to the teaching of the Redeemer; he points to the Apostles and their procedure; the authority of the Primitive Church is everywhere

appealed to. To bring out the doctrine of the Scriptures (*fides Scripturae*) as of supreme authority, is his highest aim. And how much his sermons are saturated with Bible thoughts and interwoven in their whole tissue of thinking and presentation with Bible reminiscences, the sermon marked No. III. in the Appendix, may be taken as a proof, which is given as a sample. And with reference to Wiclif's advice mentioned above, that the Biblical history especially should be preached to the people, it should not pass without mention that he very frequently narrates, in a clear and simple style, the history contained in the Gospel for the day, interweaving the story with explanatory remarks. After doing so, it is true, he not unfrequently passes on to set forth the "mystical sense" of the passage. On one occasion he justifies this with the words, "To get at a meaning of this history, which will be good for the edification of the people, its mystical sense has to be considered."³¹ I find, however, that Wiclif's "mystical interpretation," as he makes use of it in the Latin sermons, sometimes consists in nothing more than a simple bringing out of religious truths, and a moral application to his hearers, and to the present time, of the features of the history which he takes for his text.

There are many things, indeed, largely handled in these sermons, which are far from being Biblical subjects, such, e.g., as the Standing and the Rights of the Papacy, the Landed Endowments of the Church, Monachism, and particularly the Mendicant Orders, etc. In this way much matter is brought into discussion, and polemically handled, which is ecclesiastical and even ecclesiastico-political; and this seems at first sight to be out of keeping with his own principle, that the matter of preaching should be God's Word. But when I look into the scope and object of these polemical and ecclesi-

astico-political discussions, I come to this result, that it is always the Bible which the preacher applies to these questions as his rule of judgment, and that he has never any other aim in view but to establish Apostolic doctrines, and to realise again, in the present, the conditions of the primitive Church. It would be an injustice, therefore, to look upon all these parts of his sermons as digressions, by which Wiclif became untrue to his own principle, that the Gospel is the proper subject of all preaching. There is only one thing about his sermons which must at once be conceded, and that is that the innermost kernel of the Gospel (according to the conviction of evangelical Christendom in our own time) is not to be met with in them, *i.e.*, the doctrine of reconciliation through Jesus Christ and the way of salvation, especially of the justification of the sinner through faith. But this is not the proper place to go into this fact, to which we shall hereafter return in our analysis of Wiclif's doctrine.

This is fun. You should join in,

When we examine the sermons of Wiclif in reference to their form, their manner of presentation, style, and tone, we meet also here with appearances which cannot but seem strange to us when put alongside of his own principles respecting the form of preaching. For we find scholastic formulæ, abstract ideas, formal definitions, learned investigations, syllogistic and dialectical argumentation, all in a measure which we should not have expected from him in view of the homiletic maxims which he has himself expressed. But there are two things here which we must not leave out of sight: first, the circumstance that the Latin sermons, as remarked above, were probably preached in Oxford before the University, or at all events, before audiences made up of men of learning. In such circumstances the preacher had

no need to let himself down to so plain a style as would have been necessary in addressing a rural congregation. On the contrary, Wiclf did right to keep in view the requirements of a University church, and the style of preaching to which such hearers were accustomed. No wonder, then, that we find so much in the form of these sermons, which, to our feeling, appears more suitable to the lecture-room than the Church—to the chair of the professor than to the pulpit. And secondly, in order to form a just judgment, we ought not to under-estimate the force of custom and influence which the forms of thought and style prevalent throughout the whole of a period, exercise, sometimes unconsciously, even upon the most distinguished genius.

On the other hand, however, we remark that even in these sermons there is no lack of that *plana locutio* which Wiclf recommended to preachers. The style is very often simple and clear, the mode of expression not without vividness, sometimes picturesque and apposite to popular taste, and here and there too, especially in polemical passages, not without a touch even of banter and raillery. The tone is by no means uniformly didactic; on the contrary, it rises every now and then into considerable animation—into moral pathos, as, *e.g.*, where he is speaking of prayer, and is commanding general prayer in comparison with intercession for particular prayers. The preacher, after referring to an argument which was used on the other side, exclaims, “O! if the Apostle had heard this piece of subtle hair-splitting, how much would he have despised it.”³²

In the English sermons, we find still more frequently a plain and popular, even a drastic style of speaking, and a moving heart-felt tone, especially when the preacher anticipates the judgment-seat and the last reckoning. In the

sermon on the second Sunday of Advent, we meet with this passage, *e.g.*, "Faith in earnest in this third coming of Christ ought to draw men away from sin and attract them to virtue. For if they had to appear to-morrow morning before an earthly judge, and might either win or lose great revenues as the result, they would surely prepare themselves with all diligence for the trial. How much more so if they were to win or to lose their life itself! Lord, as we are certain of this, that the day of the Lord will come, and we know not how soon, and as judgment will then pass upon us, to adjudge us either to life in heaven or to everlasting death in hell, how diligent do we behove to be to make ready for the event! Verily, it is our lack of faith which is to blame for our indolence; let us therefore make fast in our convictions the articles of the truth; these become loose in us like nails in a beam of timber, and so we need to drive them home with the hammer and make them fast," etc., etc.³³

Lastly, as concerns the tone of these sermons, and the moral spirit which dictates their whole contents, it will not be easy for any one who allows them to work upon him without prejudice, not to receive the impression that there is here a veritable zeal for the glory of God—a pure love to the Redeemer, and a sincere concern for the salvation of souls. There reigns throughout them a truly godly mind, whose habit is to view all that is earthly in its relations to a higher world, and to deal with it all in the light of eternity. It is impossible to think otherwise of such a preacher, so full of earnest godliness and Christian conscientiousness, but that he must have made a deep impression upon all men who did not deliberately stand aloof from the sphere of his influence and power.

SECTION II.—*Wiclid's Itinerant Preachers.*

If Wiclid's work as a preacher in the University was important, it may be expected beforehand that he also did a true and blessed work among his flock at Lutterworth, as a parish priest. In the last years of his life, as we shall see below, he was shut out from the University of Oxford, and was thus able to devote to the pastoral office the whole time and strength which yet remained to him.

First, let us be allowed to introduce here a picture whose original has been conjectured, not without good grounds, to have been no other than Wiclid himself. Geoffrey Chaucer, the father of English poetry, as he is commonly called, was a younger contemporary of Wiclid; but though he satirises the sins and infirmities of his time without sparing even those of the clergy, he was certainly not a man whose spirit was congenial with Wiclid's. He was entirely a man of the world, of æsthetic culture, enlightened, and an enemy to all superstition, but also to all religious earnestness a stranger. He knows, however, how to value what is good and worthy of honour wherever he finds it. And so, in the prologue to his *Canterbury Tales*, which are an imitation of Boccacio's *Decamerone*, he has interwoven the following beautiful description of a country priest, which includes, at all events, some lineaments of Wiclid:—

“ But rich he was of holy thought and work,
He was also a learnèd man—a clerk,
That Christ's Gospel truely would preach,
His parishens devoutly would he teach.
Benign he was, and wondrous diligent,
And in adversity full patient;
And such he was yprovèd often sithes (times),
Full loth were him to answer for his tithes,

But rather would he given, out of doubt,
Unto his poor parishioners about
Of his offering, and eke of his substance.
He could in little thing have suffisance.
Wide was his parish, and houses far asunder,
But he ne left nougnt for ne rain nor thunder.
In sickness and in mischief, to visit
The farthest in his parish, much and lit (great and small),
Upon his feet, and in his hand a staff.
This noble example to his sheep he yaf (gave),
That first he wrought and afterward he taught."

There are several features of this portrait which agree with the character of Wiclif, and not a single feature can be detected in it which does not suit him. The humility, the contentment, and the unselfishness; the moral spotlessness, the compassionate love, the conscientious and diligent faithfulness in his office, and the Biblical matter of his sermons,—these lineaments are all apposite. The learning of the man is also made prominent. Pre-eminently like him also is the oneness of teaching and conduct exhibited in the picture; the doing of the good going before the teaching of it. The remark of Vaughan, indeed, has some ground, that in these characteristics of a country priest, the grand features of Wiclif as a Reformer are entirely wanting. But this circumstance by no means tells against the conjecture that the poet intended to paint Wiclif as a pastor, and nothing else. For it is not merely doubtful, but in the highest degree improbable, that Chaucer had any appreciation of the great Reformation-thoughts and strivings of Wiclif, or ever gave them any recognition in a practical form. Chaucer took up a position in reference to ecclesiastical matters which may most readily be compared with the mode of thought of many of the humanists at the beginning of the sixteenth century—an open eye and a mocking laugh for all clerical failings and weaknesses,

but no heart for the earnestness and the sanctity of the subject. But undoubtedly he had a sense for moral excellence in humble life.

If Wiclif, by his conscientious faithfulness in the pastoral cure, stood forth as a model preacher and pastor, he worked in this way effectually for the elevation of the office, even if he had done nothing more. But he did not confine himself to this: both by word and deed he laboured to promote everywhere the right preaching of the Gospel, and the most effective instrumentality which he used for that end was the institution of a Preaching Itinerancy.

It has long been known that Wiclif sent out itinerant preachers of the Gospel. Lewis, it is true, only touches the subject incidentally, in so far as he mentions one or another English tract in which Wiclif speaks of “poor priests,” and in their defence. Vaughan, on the other hand, has gone fully into the subject, and has given a clear and distinct picture of those diligent and devoted men.³⁴ Shirley also has determined several interesting points of view in regard to the whole institution.³⁵ The subject is now well understood to a certain extent. There are still, however, certain questions of importance relating to it, which have never yet received an answer, or rather it has hardly yet occurred to any one to propose them. The questions are these: At what date did Wiclif begin to send out itinerant preachers? And how was he led to entertain the idea of such a step at all? It happens in this case, as so often in history—an important phenomenon steps, mature and in full form, into the light. While it was preparing itself in the silence it was never thought of; all at once it stands revealed before the world.

At the end of May 1382, the Archbishop of Canterbury, William Courtenay, in a mandate addressed to the Bishop of

London, spoke of "certain unauthorised itinerant preachers who, as he had unhappily been compelled to learn, set forth erroneous, yea, heretical assertions in public sermons, not only in churches, but also in public squares and other profane places," and "they do this," as he adds with special emphasis, under the guise of great holiness, but without having obtained any episcopal or papal authorisation"³⁶ That the Primate means by these men real Wiclitte itinerants, appears with certainty from the twenty-four articles of doctrine annexed to the mandate, all of which, with hardly an exception, belong to Wiclit. To this same date must also belong several English tracts in which Wiclit undertakes the defence of the proceedings of the itinerants. *I think it makes this dull book*

It is clear that in May 1382, the preaching itinerancy was already in full swing. But we should like to know its first beginnings, for it is only there we can get an insight into the motives and causes which conspired to give it birth. On that subject Wiclit himself could best have given us information; but he was not the man to speak much of a matter before he took action in it. At the utmost he justified and defended afterwards what had been done. *lots move*

It might be supposed that it was first at Lutterworth, in his quiet rural charge, that Wiclit began to send forth itinerant preachers. In this case the presumption would have readily offered itself, that he had sought and found in this new institute a substitute for the wider and more stirring sphere of work from which he had been cut off. To me, however, it appears, on more than one ground, that Oxford was the cradle of the new institution. First of all, it lies in the nature of the subject that the sending forth of itinerants could only have developed itself gradually, and *interesting*

in the course of several years. But as in May 1382, the public attention was already drawn to it, and the itinerary had manifestly been already for some time in full operation,³⁷ this takes us several years farther back, to a date when Wiclif resided in the University for a good part, at least, of every year. Besides, the work did not consist merely in the sending out of the preachers; they must be prepared beforehand for their calling. This was the capital point, and this again could not be done in a hurry. This consideration carries our eye naturally to the University, especially as in the small town of Lutterworth we can hardly imagine such a circle of educated theologians being collected round the parish priest, even though the priest was a Wiclif. It is far easier to suppose that Wiclif, while still in Oxford, entered into close relations to a number of young men who were in part graduates in Arts and in part youths under age who were still in their undergraduate course. It is independently probable that a personality of such high distinction, as well in the field of learning as in practical church work, should have drawn around himself not a few susceptible young men, who desired to carry on their culture still further under his guidance.

What we could not fail to conjecture beforehand is found to be confirmed by positive proof. An enthusiastic follower of Wiclif—William Thorpe—in his examination before the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Arundel, gave the following information concerning the course of his own studies, and his relation to Wiclif: “I begged my parents for permission to go to such men as were reputed to be wise and virtuous priests, in order to receive their counsel, and to be instructed by them in the office and calling of the priesthood. As my father and mother gave their

willing and hearty consent to this, I betook myself to those priests of whom I had heard that they bore the best names, and led the holiest lives—the most learned too, and the wisest in point of heavenly wisdom. And I remained long enough in intercourse with them to be convinced, by their constant occupation in what was virtuous and good, that their works, so rich in charity and worthy of all honour, even exceeded the fame which I had earlier heard of them. It was then my endeavour, after the example of their doctrine, but principally of their godly and blameless works, to come to a perfect knowledge of God's law, to the best of my ability, with the will and desire to frame my life accordingly." In the further course of his examination the Archbishop inquired, Who then were those holy and wise men whose instruction he had engaged? Whereupon Thorpe replied, "Magister John Wiclid was held by right many for the greatest scholar of that day; he was spoken of, at the same time, as a man of strict religious principles, and blameless in his walk." But, besides Wiclid himself, Thorpe names several of his admirers, such as John Aston, Nicolas Hereford, John Purvey, and others, and then continues thus,—"With all these men I was right-well acquainted, and for a long time had much intercourse with them, and received instructions from them; but from Wiclid himself most of all, as the most virtuous and most godly wise man whom I ever heard of, or whom I ever in my life became acquainted with."³⁸ ~~I love you. You are~~

The whole account sounds as though Thorpe had enjoyed the instruction of all these men at the same time. If this is so, then we cannot think of Lutterworth, but only of Oxford, as the place where Thorpe had cultivated intercourse

perfect . . .

with those worthy men, and especially with Wiclif himself. This confession, therefore, leads us directly to the assumption that Wiclif had already begun in Oxford to train younger men to the priestly office, and in particular to the office of preaching. We shall scarcely err, if we assume that Wiclif, as long as he worked in Oxford as a Doctor of Theology, and was in the habit of preaching frequently, if not regularly, before the University, formed there a training school of preachers,—a sort of Priest Seminary, which, however, was of an entirely private and voluntary character. I have not a moment's doubt, that while he was still in Oxford, Wiclif sent out as voluntary itinerant preachers, young men belonging to this circle, which had attached itself so closely to his person, and had embraced his theological views and convictions as well as his practical Church principles. Perhaps the entrance which the first preachers of his school found among the people, and the warm acceptance which their sermons obtained in the country districts, gave fresh courage to himself and his scholars, so that the first itinerants were followed by ever increasing numbers, and the whole undertaking gradually took root and extended itself. Wiclif, of course, when, at a later period, he withdrew entirely to Lutterworth, did not give up this agency, but carried it on with all the more zeal, the more painfully he felt that, by his dismissal from the University, a field of richly blessed work had been closed to his ministry. *Believe that for my sake.*

But how was this agency meant? and how did the affair develop itself in actual life? Was it meant that a systematic rivalry and opposition should be made by the itinerants against the parochial clergy? The opponents of the movement naturally viewed it in this light, and even at the

sake.

present day there are not wanting Roman Catholic historians who have admitted to their minds this idea.³⁹ But how can this view of the subject be even thinkable, when the itinerants, on this supposition, would have pronounced sentence of condemnation upon the venerated master himself, who was never himself one of the itinerant preachers, but preferred to work precisely in the character of a parish priest among his own flock. Moreover, the hierarchy would certainly not have omitted to accuse the itinerants of hostility to the parochial clergy, and the calumny of their characters; but of this I find not a single trace. All they are accused of is that they promulgate erroneous doctrine, and that they preach at their own hand without episcopal sanction. This, indeed, is only an *argumentum ex silentio*. But I am able to appeal, in support of the opposite view, to express testimonies as well, and these from Wiclit's own mouth. In his little book, *Of the Pastoral Office*, he does battle, indeed, with much degeneracy among the parochial clergy, with their worldliness, with their neglect in preaching the Gospel, with the evil custom of non-residence in their parishes.⁴⁰ Already, too, he appears as the advocate of "the simple priests," i.e., the evangelical itinerants; but he stands up at the same time for the parish priests, if they only do their duty in some sort. He defends their rights against the encroachments of the begging monks, and also in the face of the incorporation of parish tithes with foundations and monasteries, he roundly and clearly lays down the principle, that all parishes should be able to pay for the ministrations which their pastors in humility render to them.⁴¹ Also in his Latin sermons, Wiclit blames, it is true, those parish priests who are "dumb dogs, and cannot bark" (Is. lvi. 10), or who preach only for selfish

ends and ambition ;⁴¹ but still he expects also great things from true and prudent pastors,⁴³ and lays upon the heart of the parochial clergy, the Redeemer's admonition, "Watch." It is their duty to keep watch over their flocks. And at the end of the tract to be mentioned below—*Why Poor Priests have no Tithes*—Wiclif gives the express assurance, that these priests, notwithstanding this difference in their position, pronounce no condemnation upon those pastors who do their duty and teach truly and steadfastly the law of God in opposition to the prophets and the decrees of the wicked fiend.⁴⁵ According to all this, there is certainly no ground to assume that the Wiclifite itinerants allowed themselves to run down the parochial clergy as such without distinction ; although it cannot of course admit of a doubt that with regard to unconscientious and worldly-minded pastors and preachers, they were in the habit of expressing themselves in no very measured language.

The sending forth of these itinerant preachers was a measure which, so far as I see, passed through several stages of development. In its first stage, the preachers were exclusively men who had already received orders. This appears from the title which Wiclif is wont to apply to them. In his work on *The Pastoral Office*, he calls them sometimes "presbyters," sometimes "priests," and yet in such a way as to indicate clearly by the connection, or by the use of epithets like *faithful* or *simple* priests, or presbyters, what description of clergy he means. However much his opponents may have looked down upon such men, as "uneducated" and "stupid"—a reproach which Wiclif bravely takes to be levelled against himself as well as others⁴⁶—they must still have been

men who had received ordination, otherwise Wiclid would certainly never have applied to them the names of priests. And yet this name occurs both in his Latin writings and in his English sermons and tracts.⁴⁷ With this also agrees the justification of the free preaching of every priest, which William Thorpe put forth in his examination before Archbishop Arundel a quarter of a century later, and which, without doubt, originally proceeded from the teaching of Wiclid himself. Thorpe expresses himself in the following terms:—“By the authority of the Word of God, and also of several saints and doctors, I have been brought to the conviction that it is the office and duty of every priest, faithfully, freely, and truly to preach God’s Word.⁴⁸ Without doubt, every priest, in determining to take orders, behoved to do so chiefly with the object of preaching the Word of God to the people to the best of his ability. We are accordingly bound by Christ’s command and holy example, and also by the testimony of his holy apostles and prophets, under heavy pains, to exercise ourselves in such wise, as to fulfil this duty of the priesthood to the best of our knowledge and powers. We believe that this is the chief duty of every priest: to make God’s will known to his people by faithful labour, and to publish it to them in the spirit of love, to the best of our ability, where, when, and to whomsoever we may; this, by the high warranty of God’s Word, is our true duty.”

Thorpe, who was an itinerant of Wiclid’s school, speaks in this passage as a priest himself, and in the name of others like-minded with himself, who were also in priest’s orders.

But even in this first stage, where only priests went out as itinerants—two sub-stages must, I think, be distinguished

from one another. At the beginning of the movement, it was scarcely laid down as a principle, that no one was to accept a pastoral charge. At a later stage, men made a virtue of necessity, and the principle was adopted, that even if such a charge might be obtained, it was better not to accept it. This is the position taken in the tract, *Why Poor Priests have no Benefice*,⁴⁸ and the principle just named is justified on three grounds. 1. Generally speaking, no benefice is to be obtained without simony, whether the right of collation be in the hands of a prelate or a temporal lord. 2. That the beneficed priest, by reason of his dependence upon his ecclesiastical superiors, will be compelled to give up to them, contrary to right, all that portion of his revenues which exceeds his own necessities, and which by God's law and public right, ought to be expended upon the poor. 3. A priest without benefice, not being bound to a particular parish, and being free of the jurisdiction of sinful men, is left at liberty to preach the Gospel wherever he can be of use, and can also without hindrance flee from one city to another, according to Christ's instruction, in case he should be persecuted by the "clergy of Antichrist."

But in the second stage of the matter, a step full of importance was taken in advance. The adoption of lay preaching was resolved upon, as it had been practised before among the Waldensians, with whom lay preaching had been a powerful factor of their whole movement; and yet, (so far at least as I know the writings of Wiclit), he was not at all aware of this precedent, and acted quite independently of it.

That lay preachers appeared among the Lollards after Wiclit's death does not admit of a doubt, but that even

in his lifetime, and with his knowledge and approval, laymen were employed as itinerant preachers, I believe I am able to prove. It is certainly no accidental circumstance that Wiclif in sermons of his latest years, when he refers to his beloved itinerants, no longer speaks of them as poor priests, or *simple* or believing priests, but on all occasions applies to them the names of *evangelical men*, or “*apostolic men*.⁵⁰ It looks as if, in such places, he intentionally avoided the name of priests, because this was now no longer applicable to all the itinerants. But still more clearly does this appear from a passage in the “*Dialogus*,” or “*Speculum Ecclesiae Militantis*.” In this piece, which was written, certainly not earlier than 1381, and probably not before 1383, when comparing the beneficed clergy with the itinerants, he makes use of these words: “And as respects the fruits of preaching, it appears certain that a single unlearned preacher effects more, by the grace of God, for the edification of the Church of Christ than many who have graduated in schools or colleges, because the former scatters the seed of the law of Christ more humbly and more abundantly both in deed and in word.”⁵¹ But the most convincing passage of all, to my mind, is that which occurs in one of his later sermons, where Wiclif shows with great emphasis that for a ministry in the Church the Divine call and commission are perfectly sufficient; there is an installation by God Himself, although the bishop has given in such a case no imposition of hands, in accordance with his traditions.⁵²

If the fact was so, as we have now, we believe, shown to be probable, that the “*Itinerancy*” began at a time when Wiclif still belonged to the University, we are justified in further assuming that Oxford was the starting-point, and that the country immediately surrounding this city was

the first theatre of the new movement. It then spread itself from thence more widely in the land. From several facts, attested by written documents, it appears that the town of Leicester was a second centre of the Wyclifite itinerary—a fact which was, no doubt, connected with the circumstance that in the last years of his life Wyclif had his settled residence in Lutterworth, which lay in the county of Leicester. One of the first who appeared as an itinerant preacher was John of Aston. He was followed, also in Wyclif's life-time, by William Thorpe, already mentioned, and others. These men went forth in long garments of coarse red woollen cloth, bare-foot, and staff in hand, in order to represent themselves as pilgrims, and their wayfaring as a kind of pilgrimage; their coarse woollen dress being a symbol of their poverty and toil ("poor priests"). Thus they wandered from village to village, from town to town, and from county to county, without stop or rest, preaching, teaching, warning, wherever they could find willing hearers, sometimes in church or chapel, wherever any such stood open for prayer and quiet devotion; sometimes in the church-yard when they found the church itself closed; and sometimes in the public street or market place.⁵³

Their sermons were, before everything else, full of Bible truth. This was to be expected from them, for these men had all gone forth from Wyclif's school, had imbibed his principles, and had all formed themselves as preachers upon his model. They had learned to regard as their chief duty "the faithful scattering of the seed of God's Word;" and their sole aim was to minister sound nourishment to the people.⁵⁴ "God's Word," "God's Law," therefore, was not only their text, but their theme; and it agrees perfectly with the picture which we could not fail beforehand

to draw for ourselves, when the Leicester chronicler, who tells us that he had more than once been a hearer of their preaching, testifies that the preachers were continually enforcing that "no man could become righteous and well-pleasing to God who did not hold to God's law, for that," says he, "was their favourite expression—'Goddis lawe,'⁵⁵ to which they were ever appealing in all their addresses." Wiclif himself, in his English tract, *Of Good Prechynge Prestis*, sets forth, that their first aim was directed to this, that God's law should at all times be known, taught, applied, and highly regarded.⁵⁶ ✓ *Love your body*

But that these sermons or exhortations⁵⁷ were less of a dogmatic than an ethical character, we may gather not only from the name which, after Wiclif's example, they were in the habit of applying to the Word of God,—viz., God's law,—but also from the confirmatory statements of Wiclif and their opponents. In the tract just mentioned, Wiclif states that the second aim of the "good preaching priests" was that all gross open sins prevailing among different ranks, and also the hypocrisy and erroneous teaching of Antichrist and his followers, *i.e.*, the Pope and the Popish clergy, should be done away; while, in the third place, they strove to promote true love in all Christendom, and especially in England, and so to help men to reach securely the blessedness of heaven.⁵⁸ *and it will love you.*

The form and language of these addresses behaved, according to Wiclif's principles, to be plain and simple.⁵⁹ But these men, according to all the notices which we possess of them, must have been in the habit of using language of a very emphatic and trenchant description; and this, as well when they laboured directly for the awakening and moral regeneration of the people, setting eternity before

their eyes, and exhorting them to live in Christian brotherhood and peace and beneficence, as when they depicted the prevailing sins of the time, held up before all ranks their vices and lusts, and especially exposed to reprobation the vices of the clergy—their hypocrisy, sensuality, avarice and ambition. From the description given of these popular discourses by the ear-witness of Leicester, entirely adverse as he was to the movement, one receives a vivid impression both of the winning attractiveness and unction, and of the arresting and subduing power by which they must have been characterised.⁶⁰ When we remember the moral earnestness, and the crushing power which we have felt in

- ✓ Wiclif himself as a preacher, we cannot wonder that his scholars also, men in earnest with “God’s Law,” should have rebuked the prevailing sins of the time without reserve and with all sharpness. Of course this severity ✓ of speech, especially when they directed it against the hierarchy, offended the latter in the highest degree, and slanders were spread about the preachers, that the only thing they were able to do was to abuse the prelates behind their backs; they were undermining the whole frame of the Church; they were serpents casting forth deadly poison.⁹¹ *Louc the bodies of cthers*

Against these calumnies Wiclif defended his followers in a tract entitled *The Deceits of Satan and his Priests*. “Almighty God who is full of love, gave commandment to his prophets to cry aloud, to spare not, and to show to the people their great sins (Isaiah lviii. 1). The sin of the common people is great, the sin of the lords, the mighty and the wise, is greater, but greatest of all is the sin of the prelates, and most blinding to the people. And therefore are true men by God’s commandment bound to cry out the

loudest against the sin of the prelates, because it is in itself the greatest, and to the people of greatest mischief." ⁶²

Wiclif, as we before had occasion to see, sent forth a considerable number of tracts which related exclusively, or at least chiefly, to the itinerant preachers of his school. There are still extant both English and Latin writings of this kind. Those in English are all defences of the preachers, some of them taking the form of controversy against their opponents. To this class belong, e.g., the following tracts:—*Of Good Preaching Priests*,⁶³ *Why Poor Priests have no Benefices*,⁶⁴ *Of Feigned Contemplative Life*,⁶⁵ *Of Obedience to Prelates*,⁶⁶ *Mirror of Antichrist*.⁶⁷ These writings, it is true, are all placed by Arnold among the works of doubtful authenticity. Among the Latin writings is, e.g., the small tract, *Of Academic Degrees*, including a defence of the itinerants; the sole object of which is to prove that the preaching of the Gospel by men who are not graduates is justified by the Scriptures, and allowed by the Church.⁶⁸ *and their bodies will blot you*

While the tracts hitherto named treat chiefly of the itinerants, but were in the first instance intended less for them than for the people, and in part for the learned class (such as the tract last mentioned), there is also a small book which I find among Wiclif's writings, which was composed primarily and directly for those simple preachers themselves. I refer to the tract of *The Six Yokes*. For as to the so-called *Letter to the Simple Priests*, it is neither, as I have been convinced for some years, a real letter in form (although it occurs under this title in two catalogues of Wiclif's writings made at the beginning of the fifteenth century), nor does it relate to the itinerants, but obviously treats of ordinary parish priests. The whole appears to me

to be a fragment either taken from some tractate, or (which I think quite possible) from a Latin sermon.⁶⁹

The tract of *The Six Yokes*, on the other hand, appears to me to have been designed by Wiclif for those of his friends who devoted themselves to the itinerancy. Its very commencement indicates this,—“In order that unlearned and simple preachers, who are burning with zeal for souls, may have materials for preaching,” etc. And as this is the only tract of Wiclif known to us which was written for this purpose, and is besides fitted to give us some insight into the substance of these popular preachings, and particularly into their moral exhortations and reproofs, I think it advisable to publish it at full length, in Appendix No. 7. I must here remark, however, that the materials of this tract were originally interwoven with several of his Latin sermons, and were only subsequently formed into an independent whole. For I find in the *Saints' Day Sermons*, some of the same portions which now form several chapters of the tract.⁷⁰ The English sermons, too, lately issued by the Clarendon Press, leave the impression, at least in several places, of being sketches intended by the author for the use of others rather than his own. At the end of the very first of them, *e.g.*, occurs the remark, “In this Gospel of the day priests have occasion to speak of the false pride of the rich, and of the luxurious living of great men of the world, and of the long-enduring pains of hell and the blessedness of heaven; and may so extend the sermon as circumstances require.” Still more characteristic is the concluding remark of the second sermon. “Here the preacher may touch upon all manner of sins, especially those of false priests and traitors of God, whose duty it is to deal faithfully with the people for their salvation, and

to show them the way of the law of Christ, and the deceitful wiles of Antichrist.”⁷¹ These and other passages, of which we could mention several more, lead us to the conjecture that these sermons of Wiclif were composed by him, in part at least, for the benefit of the itinerants of his school, in the way of helps and guides, and collections of materials. At all events the fact is certain that no inconsiderable part of the literary labours of Wiclif centred in the Institute founded by him for this preaching itinerary, and was designed to be serviceable to the preachers, either in the way of defending them from attack, or assisting them in their work.

LOVE their minds.
They are perfect too.

Love them
and they will love
you.

Please
do this for
me.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VI.

1. Comp. Shirley, *Fasc. Zizan.*, 305. *Cum Magister Nicolaus (Hereford) in Quadragesima prædicasset publice in Ecclesia B. Virginis in lingua latina coram toto clero, etc.*
2. *Evangelia de Sanctis*, No. 3, fol. 5, col. 2 of the Vienna MS. 3928. (Dénis CCCC.)
3. Twelfth Sermon, fol. 28, col. 4 of the same MS.:—*Nam frater alienigena, de regno suo portans pecuniam paucam, ut theologiam discat Oxoniæ, etc.*
4. No. 24 in the Twenty-four Miscellaneous Sermons, fol. 185 f. of the same MS.
5. The two oldest extant catalogues of Wiclif's writings, found in two Vienna MSS., dating from the beginning of the fifteenth century, agree in giving this collection the title *XL. Sermones compositi dum stetit in scholis*, in contrast to another collection which is entitled, *Sermones XX. compositi in fine vitae sue*. This confirms the correctness of an observation which I had made before this notice was known to me.
6. This collection of sermons stands beside a collection of Sermons for Saints' Days (written later), and of twenty-four Miscellaneous Sermons (also dating from Wiclif's last years), and also beside a few short essays, in the Vienna MS., 3928 (Dénis CCCC). The collection of forty sermons (which, however, number only thirty-eight) begins at fol. 193 of the MS., and the two sermons on Luke vi. 4 are the eighth and ninth in number of the collection, fol. 206-210. The second of these two is of sufficient importance, in our view, to be printed at full length in the Appendix, No. 5.
7. In the sermon last mentioned (comp. preceding note), Wiclif reminds his hearers of the exhortation of the Apostle Peter, “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God;” and declares that men now-a-days in preaching do not preach the Word of God, but *gesta, poemata vel fabulas extra corpus Scripturæ*, fol. 208, col. 1. He says the same thing in the sermon preceding, fol. 206, col. 3. In a later collection of sermons, 61 *Evangelia de Sanctis*—in sermon 56 he speaks of *tragoediae vel comoediae et fabulae vel sententiae apocriphæ, quae sunt hodie populo prædicatae*. And in the work *De Officio Pastorali*, Leipzig 1863, v. II., c. 5, p. 37, he says of the Mendicant Monks, *Et tota sollicitudo est eorum, non verba evangelica et saluti subditorum utilia seminare, sed fraudes, joca, mendacia, per quae possunt populum facilius spoliare*. Also in the Treatise, *De Veritate S. Scripturæ*,

Wiclf lays down the principle : *Theologus debet seminare veritatem Scripturae, non gesta vel chronicas mundiales.*

8. Sermo magistri Stephani de Lungeduna, Archiep. Cantuar. de Sancta Maria, in the Arundel MSS. of the British Museum. Wright gives the whole sermon in his *Biographia Britannica Lit.* II., 446 f.

9. An elder contemporary of Wiclf, Thomas Walleyes, an English Dominican, †1340, published a book, entitled *Metamorphosis Ovidiana Moraliter Explanata*, which was printed six times at least onwards from the end of the fifteenth century. Comp. *Histoire Literaire de la France. Quatorzieme siecle. Tom. XXIV.*, p. 371 and L1. And another Dominican, an Oxford Doctor, John Bromyard, drew up a collection of histories, alphabetically arranged under certain heads, which were all intended for the use of preachers (hence the title of the work : *Summa Praedicantium*) ; but his histories are in good part taken from the popular story-tellers. *Hist. Liter. de la France, XXIV.*, 372.

10. Wiclf—*De Officio Pastorali*, II., 5—thinks that the people should despise such monks as preachers, for an additional reason—viz., because it was their custom to make a collection immediately after their sermons.

11. In 1719, the French Dominican, James Echard, published vol. I., and in 1722 vol. II., of a collection, in historical order, of the works of his Order, *Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum*, etc., in which he speaks strongly enough of the Dominican style of preaching in the fourteenth century, and censures those *historiolas ineptas et insulsas*, II. 762.

11. In the sermon referred to above, fol. 208, col. 1, it is said of the modern preacher : *Praedicando Scripturam dividet ipsam ultra minuta naturalia, et allegabit moralizando per colores rhythmos quousque non appareat textus Scripturae.*

12. In the same sermon, fol. 208, col. 2—*Inanis gloriae cupidus est qui in nititur divisionibus verborum. Illi invicem invident qui nedum divisiones thematis sed cuiuslibet autoritatis occurrentis ingeminant.*

13. *Ars faciendi sermones.* The tract begins with the proposition—Haec est ars brevis et clara faciendi sermones, secundum formam syllogisticam, ad quam omnes alii modi sunt reducendi. Comp. *Hist. Liter. de la France, XXIV.*, 365.

14. He censures the ambitiousness which aims to exalt itself by the use of *grandia verba*, and disapproves of the attempt to give a more beautiful form to the sermon by the *color rhetorius* and by *colligantia rhythrica*, i.e., rhymes ; he goes the length even of maintaining that by this *declamatio heroica*, etc., God's Word is only falsified.

15. The twenty-second of the Sermons for Saints' Days (61 *Evangelia de Sanctis*). *Idem est spiritualiter pascere auditorium sine sententia evangelica, ac si quis faceret convivium corporale sine pane.* Vienna MS., 3928, fol. 42.

16. *Miscell. Sermons, No. 8. Verbum Dei habet vim regenerativam.* In the same MS. as above, fol. 206, col. 3.

17. The twelfth sermon of the same collection has these words—*Præcipuum officium viri ecclesiastici est gignere membra ecclesiae*, etc., fol. 52, col. 1. Again, in

ninth sermon, p. 207, col. 4—*Sacerdos Domini missus ad gignendum et nutriendum populum verbo vitae.*

18. Sermons for Saints' Days, No. 22. *Quando praedicatum est ab apostolis evangelium crescit ecclesia in virtute, sed modo, ex defectu spiritualis seminis, continue decrescit*, fol. 42, col. 3.

18. In sermon 20 of a Collection of Miscellaneous Sermons—MS. 3928, fol. 176, col. 2—Wiclif says: *Auditus tam praedicantis qnam etiam sermonem audi-entis debet fieri verbo Christi; et hinc est quod prophetæ legis veteris dixerunt, "haec dicit Deus," et apostoli praedicaverunt verbum Domini.* Farther on he mentions that the whole congregation testifies their veneration for the Gospel, “for when the Gospel is read the people rise to their feet and remain standing—they remove their hats and bonnets, cross themselves, and listen with attention, and kiss the wall of the church ; while the men of rank lay aside their swords. And all this is done to show their devotion before the Gospel of Jesus Christ, while men oftentimes deny the Gospel by their deeds.

19. In the twenty-second of the Sermons for Saints' Days, fol. 42, col. 2.

20. *Sacerdotes ad hoc discunt et docent Scripturam sacram ut ecclesia cognoscat conversationem Christi et amet eum.* MS. 3928, fol. 202, col. 4, Sermon VI.

21. Sermon 9. Appendix 3.

21. Sermons for Saints' Days, No. 31. MS. 3928, fol. 65, col. 1.

22. In the same sermon, fol. 61, col. 4.

23. No. 30 in the same collection, fol. 60, col. 3. *Verba exhortationis sun congruentiae auditorii applicanda.*

24. XL. Miscell. Sermons, No. 8, fol. 206, col. 2.

25. XXIV. Sermons, No. 4. MS. 3928, fol. 138, col. 4.

26. Same collection, No. 20, fol. 176, col. 1.

27. Vaughan in his *Life and Opinions*, etc., published some extracts from Wiclif's English sermons, upon the basis of which Engelhard wrote his “Wykliffe as a Preacher. Erlangen 1834.” But these sermons, which, in their complete form, had remained till lately in MS., have been recently given to the world in an excellent form by Thomas Arnold from the Clarendon Press, forming two volumes of Wiclif's *Select English Works*.

28. XL. Sermons, No. 11, fol. 213, col. 1.

29. Comp. XL. Miscell. Sermons, No. 5, fol. 201, col. 1.

30. XXIV. Miscell. Sermons, No. 10, fol. 153, col. 3.

31. Sermon on the Gospels, ed Arnold, v. I, 27th serm., p. 70.

32. Life and Opinions, etc., II., p. 139 f.

33. Do. II., 163 f. John de Wycliffe—a monograph. 1853, p. 275 f.

34. In the preface to his edition of the *Fasc. Zizaniorum*, p. xl. f. He justly remarks there that this feature of Wiclif's practical church reform has engaged the attention of his biographers much less than it ought to have done.

35. The document is printed in Wilkins' *Concilia Magnae Britanniae*, III., fol. 158 f. Comp. the Missive of the same Prelate, dated two days earlier, and running in about the same terms, to the Carmelite, Peter Stokes, in Oxford. *Fasc. Ziz.*, p. 275.

36. Sane frequenti clamore et divulgata fama ad nostrum pervenit auditum, etc. *Fasc. Zizan.* p. 275.

37. The *Acts and Monuments* of John Foxe, edit. by Townsend, v. III., 256 f.

38. *E.g.*, Lingard — *History of England*, v. IV.—maintains that the Wiclif preachers thought very meanly of the whole body of the parish priests.

39. In one place—*De Officio Pastorali*, I., c. 17—he refers to them as *pseudo-pastores*.

40. In the same treatise, II., 5, he says : *Appropriationes ecclesiarum cathedralium defraudent parochias a praedicatoribus legitimis verbi Dei. Deberet parochiis cunctis sufficere servitium, quod sacerdotes proprii humiliter subministrant.*

41. XL. *Miscell. Serm.* No. 29, MS. 3928, fol. 283, col. 3.

42. Sermons for Saints' Day, No. 56 as above, fol. 117, col. 1.

43. XL. *Miscell. Serm.* as above, fol. 194, col. 2.

44. Comp. Vaughan, *Life and Opinions*, II., 169.

45. *De Officio Pastorali*, II., c. 10, p. 45. *Nobis rudibus*, comp. II., c. 4, p. 36 ; *dicunt de talibus presbiteris, quod sunt stolidi ac rudes.*

46. *Treue Preestis* (True Priests). Sermons published by Arnold, v. I., p. 176, f. II., p. 173, 182 ; *pore prestis* (poor priests), tract *Lincolniensis* in *Miscellaneous Works*, p. 231. *Fifty Heresies and Errors of Friars*, c. 36, p. 393. *Great sentence of ours expounded*, c. 9, p. 293 ; comp. *De ecclesia et membris ejus*, c. 2, in three Treatises, by John Wycklyffe ; ed. Todd, p. xi. *This moveth por prestis* (poor priests) *to speke now hertily in this mater.*

47. That it is everie priest's office and duty for to preach busilie, freely, and truelie the worde of God. *Foxe, Acts and Monuments*, v. III., p. 260.

48. Vaughan, in *Life and Opinions*, etc., v. II., p. 164 f., has given large extracts from this tract, which he regards as an indubitable work of Wiclif ; but Arnold, in his *Select Works*, vol. III., p. xx., places the tract—*Whi pore prestis han no benefice*, at least among the works of doubtful authenticity.

49. Sermons for Saints' Days, Nos. 31, 37, 53, MS. 3928, fol. 61, col. 2 and 3 ; fol. 76, col. 4 ; fol. 109, col. 1.

50. *Dialogus, or Speculum Ecclesiae Militantis*, c. 27, Vienna MS. 1387 (Dénis CCCLXXXIV.), fol. 157, col. 1 ; and the like words again occur in full in the short piece, *De graduationibus Scholasticis*, c. 3, MS. 3929 (Dénis CCCLXXXV.), fol. 249, col. 2. The words run thus—*Quantum ad fructum, certum videtur quod unus ydiota, mediante Dei gratia, plus proficit ad edificandam Christi ecclesiam, quam multi graduati in scolis sive Collegiis, quia seminat humilius et copiosius legem Christi, tam opere quam sermone.*

51. Sermons for Saints' Days, No. 8, MS. 3928, fol. 17, col. 1. *Videtur ergo, quod ad esse talis ministerii ecclesiæ requiritur auctoritas acceptationis divinæ, et*

per consequens potestas ac notitia data a Deo ad tale ministerium peragendum quibus habitis, licet episcopus secundum traditiones suas non imposuit illi manus, Deus per se instituit.

52. This description rests upon several attestations of friends and foes—the latter of an official as well as private character. A document both official and of certain date is the missive given above of William Courtenay, Archbishop of Canterbury, of 30th May, 1382, directed against certain itinerant preachers, alleged to be both unauthorised and heretical, published in Wilkins' *Concilia*, and in Shirley's *Fasc. Zizan.*, p. 275. Among other things it is said—*Quidam, aeternae damnationis filii, sub magna sanctitatis velamine, auctoritatem sibi vindieant praedicandi—tam in ecclesiis quam in plateis et aliis locis profanis dictae nostrae provinciae, non verentur asserere, dogmatizare et publice praedieare.* Wiclif himself defends the practice of his friends in preaching everywhere without distinction of place, in the 37th of his Saints' Day Sermons. *Videtur mihi quod sacerdos zelans pro lege Domini, cui negatur pro loco et tempore praedicatio verbi Dei, debet usque ad passionem martyrii, in casu quo non debet esse sibi conscientia, praedicationem vel hortationem, in quocunque loco auditorium habere potest, asserere verbum Dei. Sic enim Christus non solum in sinagogis sed in castellis (Mat. ix. 35) constantius praedicabat. Locus enim non facit sanctum populum, sed e contra.* Vienna MS. 3928, fol. 75, col. 3. The Chronicler of St. Albans, Thomas Walsingham, narrates under the year 1377, that Wiclif, partly to disguise his heresy, and partly to spread it more widely, entered into alliance with other men as associates, living partly in Oxford, and partly in other parts of the kingdom, and he describes them *talaribus iudutos vestibus de russeto, in signum perfectionis amplioris, incidentes nudis pedibus, qui suos errores in populo ventilarent, etc.* He remarks, col. 2657, that he had himself heard several of these men preach.

53. *De Officio Pastorali*, II., c. 3, p. 34. *Salubriter populo praedicantes.*

54. Knighton *De Eventibus Angliae*, col. 2664. *Talem enim habebant terminum in omnibus suis dictis semper praetendendo legem Dei, Goddis lawe.*

55. *Of Good Prechynge Prestis.* Comp. Shirley, Original Works of Wiclif, p. 45. Lewis—History of John Wiclif, p. 200—gives the commencement of the piece, which indicates, at the same time, its chief substance. Arnold in *Select English Works*, III., p. xix., places this piece among the works of doubtful authenticity.

56. In more than one passage which treats of the Itinerants, Wiclif puts together *praedicationes* and *exhortationes*.

57. *Of Good Prechynge Prestis.* Comp. Vaughan, *Life and Opinions, etc.*, II., p. 187.

58. *De Officio Pastorli*, II., c. 3, p. 34. *Debet evangelisator praedicare plane evangelicam veritatem.*

59. Henr. Knighton, *De Eventibus Angliae* in Twysden's *Historiae Anglicae Scriptores*, v. III., col. 2664. *Doctrina eorum in quibuscumque loquelis in principio dulcedine plena apparuit et devota, in fine quoque invidia subtili et detractione plena defloruit.* Comp. col. 2660. *Frequenter in suis sermonibus— clamitaverunt, Trewe Preachoures, False Preachoures.*

60. The Archbishop of Canterbury in his Mandate of the year 1382, mentioned above.

61 *On the deceits of Satan and his priests*, after Vaughan, *Life and Opinions etc.*, v. II., p. 184 f.

62. Comp. Lewis, *History*, p. 200 ; Shirley, Catalogue, p. 45, No. 32.

63. *Of feyned contemplatif lif*, Shirley. Comp. Lewis, p. 198. No. 107, 42, No. 26.

64. Shirley, 40, No. 12.

65. Shirley, 41, No. 17. Vaughan, *Life and Opinions*, II., p. 188 f, under the title, *On the Four Deceits of Antichrist*.

66. *De graduationibus scholasticis*, in three chapters, in Vienna MS., 3929 (Dénis CCCLXXXV., fol. 247, col. 2, 250, and in other MSS.).

67. The *Epistola Missa ad Simplices Sacerdotes* is mentioned in both the Catalogues drawn up in Bohemia, which Shirley printed in his "Catalogue"—the first from the Vienna MS., 3933 (Dénis CCCXCI.), fol. 195 ; the second from Dénis CCCXCIII., fol. 102. Comp. especially pp. 62, 68 in "Catalogue." Shirley placed too much confidence in these notices when he printed in his Introduction to the *Fasc. Zizan.* the supposed letter (to which he gave, at his own instance, the name of a circular), p. 41, note. The text which he gives requires, indeed, some not inconsiderable corrections, and yet it proves clearly enough that it has no reference to the Itinerants, and in no case was a letter addressed to that class.

68. The first chapter of the treatise forms the close of the twenty-seventh sermon in the *Evangelia de Sanctis*, in Vienna MSS., 3928, fol. 53, col. 4 ; fol. 54, col. 2. The second and third chapters make up the greatest part of the twenty-eighth sermon, from fol. 54, col. 4 onwards. The fourth chapter, again, forms the concluding part of one sermon, viz., the thirty-first, fol. 62, col. 3. The fifth chapter makes the second half of the thirty-second sermon, fol. 63, col. 3. ; fol. 64, col. 3 ; and even so does the last chapter form the second half of the thirty-third sermon, fol. 65, col. 3 ; fol. 66, col. 2. It is not, therefore, quite accurate when Shirley observes of the tractate, *De sex jugis*, that it is an extract from the Sermon II., No. 27 ; for in this sermon only the beginning of the tractate is to be found, at least in the MS. which I have made use of.

There is also observable a difference in the ways in which these several sermons are manipulated to make out the several chapters of the tractate ; for while what is used of the first sermon is closely interwoven with the contents of the first chapter, the portions of the other sermons made use of are only mechanically attached to the following chapters, inserted into them, so to speak, like fragments of exploded stone.

69. Sermon on the Gospels, v. I., 3-6.

ADDITIONAL NOTE TO CHAPTER VI., BY THE TRANSLATOR.

THE POPULARITY OF WICLIF AND HIS EARLIEST DISCIPLES AS PREACHERS IN LONDON.

If Wiclif had confined his teaching to the schools of Oxford, it would have been only slowly and indirectly that his Reformation principles would have reached the ears and the convictions of the general public. But there is some evidence to show that he was occasionally a preacher in the pulpits of London, and that he spoke out as boldly in the crowded churches of the capital of the kingdom as he had done for many years before in the learned disputationes of the University. Nor is proof wanting as to the effects which his preaching produced among the London citizens. The *Chronicon Angliae*, referred to in a former "Additional Note," is again available here, and supplies us, in particular, with some curious facts, which are new to history, touching the moral and religious influence which the Reformer's preaching began to exercise even upon the municipal administration of the city, during the mayoralty of John of Northampton.

At p. 116 of the *Chronicon* we read as follows:— "Haec et his multo graviora," referring to the new doctrines, "cum palam non tantum Oxoniæ tractasset in scholis, sed etiam in civitate Londoniarum publice prædicasset. . . . invenit quod diu quae siverat, videlicet quosdam regni dominos, vel magis recte diabolos qui ejus amplectenter deliramenta. . . . Quorum suffultus patrocinii multo audacius et animosius communicavit excommunicatam materiam, ita ut non solum dominos sed et simplices quosdam Londoniensium cives secum attraheret in erroris abysmum. Erat utique non solum facundus sed simulator, etc. (*vide Additional note to Chapter V.*), ut magis falleret commune vulgus. Qui profecto nullis argumentis, nulla scientia in Deo fulciebatur et floruit, ut opiniones suas probabiles demonstraret, sed sola compositione verborum quæ satis eructavit. Unde intricavit minus doctorum aures audientium et ventos pavit inaniter sine fructu. Dux tamen et dominus Henricus Percy ejus sententias collaudabant, et scientiam et probitatem coelotenus extollere satagebant. Accidit que ut eorum elatus favore, suas vanitates multo amplius dilatare non pertimesceret, sed de ecclesia in ecclesiam percurrendo auribus insereret plurimorum insanias suas falsas. Unde, licet sero, episcopi stimulati, excitarunt patrem suum archiepiscopum quasi de gravi somno, et quasi potentem crapulatum a vino, vel potius mercenarium avaritiæ inebriatum toxico, ut ovem errantem revocaret a tam manifestæ perditionis pabulo, et curandum committeret stabulario, aut, aliud si res exigeret, uteretur abscissionis ferro."

Here, then, we learn, for the first time, what it was in Wiclif's doings that first stimulated the bishops to take public action against him—not so much his quiet teaching at Oxford, nor his learned judgments given to the King and Parliament on the points in debate between the kingdom and the Curia, but the wide-spreading effects of his preaching in the churches of London, *de ecclesia in ecclesiam per-*

currendo. He was gaining the ears of the multitude, and was making proselytes not only among the highest nobles of the land, but among the masses of the common people.

Nor was it long before his preaching began to tell even upon the proceedings of the mayor and common council of the city. One of Wiclf's loudest complaints in the pulpit was directed against the corrupt remissness of the clergy, in the exercise of the discipline of the Church against adulterers and fornicators of both sexes. Transgressors of the seventh commandment had been long allowed to compound for their immoralities, and the clergy put money into their pockets by betraying the interests both of public and domestic virtue. The Reformer's indignation passed into the hearts of his London congregations. Many of the citizens resolved to take steps to reform so clamant a social disorder, and the Monkish Chronicler of St. Albans has handed down to us the following long-forgotten record of the rough-handed discipline which was brought to bear upon a batch of the most notorious offenders.

“Londonienses isto tempore cœperunt ultra modum insolescere in perniciosum exemplum urbium aliarum. Revera freti *Majoris* illius anni (1382), Johannis Northamptone auctoritate superciliosa, præsumpserant episcopalia jura, multas dehonestationes inferentes in fornicationibus vel adulteriis deprehensis. Captas nempe mulieres in prona quæ vocatur *Dolium* apud eos primo seclusas incarcерarunt, postremo perductas ad conspectum publicum, descissa cæsarie ad modum furum quos appellatores dicimus, circumduci fecerunt in conspectu inhabitantium civitatem, praecedentibus tubicinis et fistulatoribus, ut latius innotescerent personæ earundem. Nec minus hujusmodi hominibus pepercérunt, sed eos injuriis multis et opprobriis affecerunt. *Animati enim fuerant per Joannen Wyclife et sequaces ejus ad hujus modi perpetrandum, in reprobationem prælatorum.* Dicebant quoque se abominari curatorum non solum negligentiam, sed et detestari avaritiam, qui studentes pecuniae, omissis poenis a jure limitatis, et receptis nummis, reos fornicationis et incestus favorabiliter in suis criminibus vivere permiserunt. Dicebant se utique pertimescere, ne propter talia peccata in urbe perpetrata sed dissimulata, tota civitas quandoque, Deo ulciscente, ruinam pateretur. Quapropter velle se purgationem facere civitatis ab hujusmodi inquinamentis, ne forte accideret eis pestis aut gladius, vel certe absorberet eos tellus.”—*Chronicon Anglie*, p. 349.

I add the Monk-Chronicler's portrait of the Lord Mayor of the time, John of Northampton, by whose authority these disciplinary severities had been carried out. He was evidently a follower of Wiclf, and an admirer of his preaching; and the influence of this first Lollard Lord Mayor was, upon the Chronicler's own showing, of great account in the city.

“Erat autem Major eorum homo duri cordis et astutus, elatus propter divitias et superbus, qui nec inferioribus acquiescere, nec superiorum allegationibus sive monitis flecti, valeret, quin quod inceperat proprio ingenio, torvo proposito ad quemcumque finem perducere niteretur. *Habebat plane totius communitatis assensum ad nova molienda.*”

CHAPTER VII.

WICLIF AS BIBLE-TRANSLATOR, AND HIS SERVICE DONE TO THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

SECTION I.—*The Novelty of the Idea of an English Translation of the whole Bible.*

IN the preceding chapter we have seen Wiclif laying down the principle, that in preaching, God's Word must be taught before everything else, because this Word is the wholesome and indispensable household bread, the seed of regeneration and conversion. Nor was it only in theory that he laid down this principle. How he knew to establish and elucidate it as a matter of doctrine we shall have opportunity to see by and bye when we come to represent his whole dogmatic system. But he also carried out the principle in life and action: first, in his own person as a preacher; and next, by sending out itinerant preachers to proclaim the Divine Word. But the same principle led him also to the work of Bible-translation. Wiclif was a character who had no love for doing anything by halves. When once he recognised a principle to be right, he knew how to carry it out completely on all sides; so here in particular. The principle that God's Word should be preached to the people, be expanded into the principle that Scripture must become the common good of all. And as a means to this end, he saw the necessity of the Bible being translated into the language of the country, with the view of giving it the widest possible diffusion among the population.

This was a thought so great, so new, and so bold for that age, that we become eager to learn what were the preparatory middle stages through which Wiclif was conducted to that great plan and its execution. But in order to understand the undertaking in its peculiarity and greatness, we must first have before us a clear idea of what was the position of this matter before Wiclif took action in it.

Sir Thomas More, the well-known statesman under Henry VIII., repelled the charge laid against the hierarchy at the time of the Reformation, that it had withheld the Holy Scriptures from the people during the Middle Ages, by the assertion that it was not true to fact, and that Wiclif was by no means the first man who had undertaken a translation of the whole Bible into English for the use of the laity, for complete English translations of it had existed long before Wiclif's time. He had himself seen beautiful old manuscripts of the English Bible, and these books had been provided with the knowledge of the Bishops.¹ Nor was More the only one who claimed to have knowledge of English translations of the Bible before Wiclif; several Protestant scholars of the seventeenth century were of the same opinion. Thomas James, the first librarian of the Bodleian, a very diligent and indefatigable polemic against the Papists, had held in his own hands an English manuscript Bible, which he judged to be much older than the days of Wiclif.² Archbishop Usher followed in the same line, when he assigned this alleged pre-Wiclitte version to about the year 1290.³ And Henry Wharton, the learned editor and completer of Usher's work, even believed himself able to show who the author of this supposed translation was, viz., John of Trevisa, a priest in Cornwall.⁴

But all these suppositions rest upon error, as was seen

several years later by the last named investigator himself, who corrected both his own text and that of Usher.⁵ Those manuscripts of the English Bible seen by Sir Thomas More, and later by Thomas James, were, it is certain, nothing more than copies of the translation executed by Wiclid and his followers. There is documentary evidence to show that at the time of the Reformation there were several manuscripts of this translation in the hands of Roman Catholic Prelates. Bishop Bonner, *e.g.*, was possessor of one which is now preserved in the Archiepiscopal Library of Lambeth, and a second copy is now in Magdalen College, Cambridge, which belonged in 1540 to a Knight of St. John, Sir William Weston.⁶ Besides, if the fact were correct, that there ever existed any older English translation of the whole Bible, some sure traces of it on the one hand would not have been wanting, and on the other we may feel very certain that, in that case, the Wiclitites would not have omitted to appeal to that fact in justification of their own undertaking. But it is quite clear from their writings that they knew nothing of any older translation; but, on the contrary, regarded their own version as the first English version of the whole Bible.⁷ Only in one solitary instance, in a tract of the years 1400–1411, is mention made, in defence of the right of possessing the Bible in the English tongue, of the fact that a citizen of London, of the name of Wering, was in possession of an English Bible, which many had seen, and which appeared to be 200 years old.⁸ Assuming that this statement of age was trustworthy, the translation in question could only have been one belonging to the Anglo-Saxon period. And how stands the case with regard to translations of that period?

All the attempts at Bible-translation and commentary

which are known to date from Anglo-Saxon times belong to that period which is called, by linguists and literary historians, the *old* Anglo-Saxon period, reaching down to A.D. 1100; while the *new* Anglo-Saxon or Half-Saxon period extends from 1100 to 1250. Now, the old Anglo-Saxon literature is comparatively rich in productions which treat of biblical subjects, both in verse and prose. To these belong the poems which go under the name of the monk Caedmon († 680, Beda, Hist. Eccl. gentes Anglorum, IV. 24), containing editions of several Old Testament passages.¹⁰ Bishop Aldhelm, of Sherborn, † 709, according to the testimony of Bale, translated the Psalter; and an Anglo-Saxon paraphrase of the Latin Psalter, which was discovered in the royal library of Paris at the beginning of the present century, is considered to be in part the work of Aldhelm. The Venerable Bede, also, while producing works for the learned, comprising all the erudition of the age, was not forgetful of the wants of the common people. We know, under his own hand, that he made a translation of the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer into Anglo-Saxon, and presented copies of it to the less educated among the priests with whom he was acquainted; indeed, his latest work was an Anglo-Saxon translation of the Gospel of John, which he had no sooner finished than he expired, in the year 735.¹¹

The greatest of the Anglo-Saxon princes, King Alfred, is known to have entertained at least the design of making parts of Scripture accessible to his subjects in the mother tongue. Not long after his time there existed a Saxon translation of the Gospels, of which several MSS. have been preserved; and if the Psalter attributed to Bishop Aldhelm should not turn out to have been his work, its date, at least, cannot be later than the tenth century.

In addition, two Latin MSS. of the Gospels, with interlinear Saxon glosses, reach up to the days of Alfred, who died in 901.¹² Similar glosses upon the Psalter and the Proverbs are known to scholars, which are conjectured to belong to the same century.

Towards the end of the tenth century, the monk and priest, Aelfric, had the extraordinary merit of executing a translation of selected parts of the Books of Moses, with Joshua and Judges, Kings, and Esther; and, in addition, of Job and the apocryphal books of Maccabees and Judith; while in his eighty Homilies he greatly promoted Bible knowledge by his renderings of the text, and by quotations from the Bible at large. The writings which have descended to the present time are sufficient to prove that the Anglo-Saxon Church was in possession of a very considerable amount of biblical material in the mother tongue. But when we reflect how much of this literature must have perished during the Danish incursions and conquests, and at a later period, in consequence of the Norman Invasion, we must form a very different conception of its extent from what is suggested by its existing remains. These Saxon glosses and translations, however, continued to be in use among the Saxon part of the population during the Norman Period—a fact which is gathered with certainty from the circumstance that several of the MSS. in question were not executed till the twelfth century.

In little more than a century after the Norman invasion, the Norman population possessed a prose translation of the Psalms, as well as of the Latin Church hymns, in their own language, the Anglo-Norman. This was the case even before the year 1200; and towards the middle of the thirteenth century the Normans had not only a Bible history in verse

reaching down to the Babylonish captivity, but also a prose translation of the whole Bible. It is a remarkable fact, indeed, attested by men of special learning in this field, that the French literature of the mediæval age was extremely rich in translations of the Bible—that it surpassed indeed in this respect the literature of all the other European peoples.¹³ Still it must always be borne in mind, as respects England in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, that the Norman tongue was only the language of the dominant race, of the higher classes, spoken at Court, in the seats of the nobles and bishops, in the courts of justice, the churches, and the garrisons, while the Saxon lived on among the middle and lower strata of the population, the traders, artizans, and peasantry. The Anglo-Norman translations of portions of the Bible could only therefore be of use to the privileged classes, while the mass of the people enjoyed none of the benefit, but on the contrary were all the less considered and provided for the more those classes were satisfied who had the power of the country in their hands.

But from the middle of the thirteenth century the Saxon element grew in strength, both in the population and the language. From that date the English language takes its development in three periods: Old English from 1250–1350, Middle English to 1500, New English from the sixteenth century downwards.

As in Anglo-Saxon and most languages, so also in Old English, the earliest attempts in Biblical subjects are of a poetical kind. Such is the “Ormulum,” a Gospel harmony in verse without rhyme,¹⁴ a work, however, not of a kind to make way among the common people. Another form somewhat later describes the chief facts of the First and Second Books of Moses.¹⁵ To the end of the thirteenth century

belongs a translation of the Psalter in verse, the language of which is simple and full of expression.

The oldest prose translation of a Bible book into Old English dates from the fourteenth century—about 1325—and, what is remarkable, two translations of the Psalms in prose appeared almost simultaneously. The one was executed by William of Shoreham, a country parish priest, in the county of Kent; the other was the work of an Eremit, Richard Rolle, of Hampole, who died in 1349. The former wrote the Psalter, verse by verse, in Latin and English, the translation being in general faithful and verbal, except that the author often substitutes the words of the gloss in place of the text. The other, the so-called Hermit of Hampole, had written in the first instance a Latin Commentary to the Psalms. This occasioned him afterwards to translate the Psalter, and to publish it with an English Commentary.¹⁶ According to a notice in English verse, found in one of the numerous MSS. of this work, and which dates from the fifteenth century, the author undertook the work at the request of a worthy nun, Dame Margaret Kirkby. The author's original was still to be seen in the nunnery at Hampole; but many copies of it had been vitiated by the Lollards in the sense of their doctrines—an imputation which the editors of the Wiclid Bible have found destitute of all confirmation, although they have examined many MSS. of this translation and commentary on the Psalter.¹⁷ A third translation of the Psalter—which is found in a Dublin MS. of the fifteenth century, and has been supposed to be the work of a certain John Hyde, because the book was at one time his property—appears from the specimens given of it to be nothing more than a revision of the language of the translation of Shoreham.¹⁸ To state the whole result for

the period, as well of the Anglo-Saxon as of the Norman and the Old English tongues, it stands as follows:—

1. A translation of the entire Bible was never during this whole period accomplished in England, and was never even apparently contemplated.

2. The Psalter was the only book of Scripture which was fully and literally translated into all the three languages—Anglo-Saxon, Anglo-Norman, and Old English.

3. In addition, several books of Scripture, especially Old Testament books, were translated partially or in select passages, *e.g.* by Aelfric, laying out of view poetical versions, and the Gospel of John, translated by Beda, which celebrated work has not come down to us.

4. Last of all,—and this fact is of great importance,—in none of these translations was it designed to make the Word of God accessible to the mass of the people, and to spread Scriptural knowledge among them. The only object which was had in view was partly to furnish aid to the clergy and to render a service to the educated class.

MUSIC can set you free

SECTION II.—*How Wiclif came to engage in this Undertaking.*

listen!

CONSIDERING that this was the state of things down to the middle of the fourteenth century, the fact becomes one of a highly important character that only thirty or forty years later a translation of the whole Bible had been executed, and that, too, with the destination of becoming the common good of the nation. And this was the work and merit of Wiclif. To what extent he did the work of translation with his own pen, it will hardly ever be possible to ascertain with perfect certainty; but so much as this is certain, that it was he who first conceived the idea of the work, that he took a personal

hare along with others in the labour of its execution, and that the carrying through of the work was due to his enthusiastic zeal and judicious guidance.

This fact is so strongly attested by manifold testimonies of friends and foes as to be put beyond all doubt. Knighton, a chronicler of the period, in a passage which was probably penned before the year 1400, laments the translation of the Bible into English, and ascribes it quite categorically to Wiclif. He maintains that Christ gave the Gospel, not to the Church, but only to the clergy and doctors of the Church, to be by them communicated to the weaker sort and the laity, at need; whereas Wiclif has rendered the Gospel from the Latin into English, and through him it has become the affair of the common people, and more accessible to the laity, including even the women who are able to read, than it used to be to the well-educated clergy. The pearl is now thrown “before swine and trodden under foot,” etc.¹⁹ When the chronicler speaks of “the Gospel” here, we are not to understand him in a restricted sense, as though he meant the translation of the New Testament only as distinguished from the Old, or even the Gospels only in distinction from the other New Testament books. We are rather to understand that that name, as is so often the case, is used for the whole of Holy Scripture. If this is so, it needs no further proof to show that Knighton regarded the translation of the Bible as the work of Wiclif.

We also find the idea and plan of a Bible-translation attributed to Wiclif in a document of official character. Archbishop Arundel of Canterbury and his suffragan bishops, in the year 1412, addressed a written memorial to Pope John XXIII., with the petition that in the exercise of his plenary apostolic powers he would pronounce sen-

tence of condemnation on the heresy of Wiclif and his party. In this document Wiclif is charged among other things with having contended with all his power against the faith and the doctrine of the Church, and, to make his malice complete, with having devised the plan of a translation of the Holy Scriptures into the mother tongue.²⁰ The language here made use of, it may be remarked in passing, is a clear proof of the fact that before Wiclif's time there was no English translation of the Bible in existence. It is also evident from the words that it was not merely single books, but the whole Bible that had now been translated. The document, however, speaks only of the idea and the plan of the work, without ascribing to Wiclif himself its execution in detail, or the translation of the Bible in all its parts. *Freedom is God.*

By the side of these testimonies proceeding from opponents may be placed the language of one of Wiclif's admirers—John Huss—who says, in a polemical tract against John Stokes of the year 1411:—"It is plain from his writings that Wiclif was not a German, but an Englishman. For the English say that he translated the whole Bible from Latin into English."²¹ *Freedom is love.*

The fact is certain, then, that Wiclif was the first to conceive the great idea, then entirely new, of a translation of the *whole* Bible, and of the Bible for the use of the whole people. What, then, we are led to ask, were the intermediate thoughts and preliminary stages by which Wiclif was led to the conception of this grand design? *God is love.*

As a great number of his writings have come down to us, it is natural that we should first look into these for information on this point. If Luther in his day takes occasion, in letters from the Wartburg and later writings to

refer every now and then to his Bible-translation, it might be supposed that Wiclit, too, must have had occasion to refer to a work whose importance and greatness lay so near his heart, and that such reference would be found to throw light upon the preliminary stages of the undertaking. But, in point of fact, it is very rare to find, either in his Latin or his English writings, any allusions to the work either while in progress or after its completion. The condition of things at that time, it must be remembered, was very different from what it was in the third and fourth decades of the sixteenth century. In Wiclit's day men could not conceal from themselves that the business was one attended with danger; and therefore it was the part of prudence not to talk loudly of the matter, so long as it was only in progress. But, notwithstanding the almost total silence of Wiclit respecting his own work, one circumstance, at least, is made probable, viz., that it was through the translation of several single books of the New Testament that he was gradually led to contemplate a complete version of the whole Bible. *Your body is God too.*

The editors of the Wiclit Bible—Rev. Josiah Forshall and Sir Frederick Madden—are of opinion that the earliest translation of a Biblical book executed by Wiclit was the Commentary upon the Revelation of St John.²² Now, it is true that, as early as the sixteenth century, Bishop Bale included among Wiclit's works an Explanation of the Apocalypse; and Shirley has admitted the same without hesitation into his list of Wiclit's genuine writings.²³ But for my own part, I do not see my way to attribute this Commentary to Wiclit; and all the less so, that the translation of the text contained in the oldest manuscripts of

the work does not agree with Wiclif's translation of it in his acknowledged version.²⁴ *your body Should*

The case is different, indeed, with the single Commentaries on the Gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John, as the English version of the Vulgate text given in these writings agrees with the Wiclif translation in its earliest form. But, in my judgment, the Commentary on the Gospel of Luke cannot be recognised as Wiclif's work, because the author in the preface writes of himself in a manner which is not at all applicable to Wiclif. The writer first introduces some words of Scripture, and then proceeds as follows:—"Therefore it is that a poor, insignificant man (a caitiff), who, for a time, has been inhibited from preaching, for causes known to God, writes the Gospel of Luke in English, for the use of the poor people of his nation, who understand little or no Latin, and are poor in wit and worldly wealth, but none the less are rich in good will to be well pleasing to God."²⁵ It is impossible to point out a moment in Wiclif's life when "for a time he was hindered from preaching the Gospel." For the allusion here has no appearance of being to a time of sickness, but rather to some hindrance on the part of ecclesiastical superiors. Thus understood, the side hint that the causes of the hindrance are known to God becomes all the more appropriate, as it hints at the wisdom of God's permission of the hindrance. The whole mode of expression appears to me to be of such a character as to indicate one of Wiclif's itinerant preachers as the writer, but not Wiclif himself.²⁶ *be free.*

Nor does the preface to the Commentary on the Gospel of John speak for the authorship of Wiclif, when the author gives for his determination to write it the following

reasons :—“ Our Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true Man, came into the world to save poor humble men, and to teach them the Gospel. Hence the Apostle Paul says that he and the other apostles of Christ are the servants of Christians for the sake of Jesus Christ; and again he says, ‘ Let every one bear another’s burdens, and so shall you fulfil the law of Christ.’ Therefore it is that a simple creature of God, willing to help to carry the burden of simple, poor men who hold with the cause of God—writes a short gloss upon the Gospel of St. John in the English tongue, and only the text of the Holy Scriptures, and the plain, short sayings of holy doctors, Greek and Latin,”²⁷ etc. This description of his own person suggests that he was writing anonymously ; whereas Wiclif, so far as I know, in all cases took the personal responsibility of what he wrote, not to mention the fact that, while he is always glad to have the support of passages in the fathers and later doctors of the Church, Wiclif never confines himself to a mere reproduction of the earlier authorities, as is done in the productions now in question, which, in substance, only give again in English what already stands in the “Catena Aurea” of Thomas Aquinas. However, as I have not been in a position to examine the manuscripts for myself, and can only rest my judgment upon the short extracts which are given in the preface to the Wiclif Bible, I do not pretend to be able to give an authoritative judgment upon the subject. Only so much as this appears to be beyond doubt, that the writer or writers of these Commentaries must have belonged to Wiclif’s school. *Sex without love is sin*

The same thing must also be said of the author of a Commentary on the first three Gospels, who gave, in the same

sin

way, a translation of the Vulgate text, with commentaries from older fathers and doctors; for "The Servant of God" who encouraged the author to undertake the work gives utterance to precisely such principles as Wiclif maintained. In the preface to Matthew the author writes as follows:—"I was induced some time ago to begin this work by a man whom I take to be truly a servant of God, and who often requested me to undertake this work on the ground that the Gospel is the rule according to which it is the duty of every Christian man to live. Now, several writers had already translated this Gospel into Latin, a language which only the learned understand, and there are many people who would willingly know the Word of God if it were rendered into the English tongue. This would be of great utility to the soul of man, and to labour heartily for this useful end is the duty of every man who stands in the grace of God, and to whom God has given the needful knowledges," etc.²⁸ *love without sex is sin*

Thus far, then, we have found nothing which can be regarded with an adequate degree of confidence as a preliminary labour of Wiclif in the work of Bible-translation. There is more reason for recognising as a work from Wiclif's hand the English translation of the Latin Harmony of the Gospels (entitled "Series Collecta") of Prior Clement of Lanthon in Monmouthshire, written in the second half of the twelfth century. For (1) this translation has always, from the sixteenth century, especially since Bishop Bale, been attributed to Wiclif, and never to any other man. (2) It varies very little from Wiclif's translation of the Gospels. (3) The preface of the translator (to be carefully distinguished from that of the Prior) is a double one, the one being identical with the preface which stands before the Commentary on Matthew's

Gospel mentioned above, while the other was evidently intended from the first to be the preface to the translation of this Gospel Harmony; and this latter preface has the unmistakeable stamp of thought and expression which is characteristic of Wiclif.

The author of the Preface takes his start from the saying of Christ, "Blessed are they who hear the Word of God and keep it;" and he draws from it in particular the conclusion that "Christians should labour day and night upon the text of Holy Scripture, especially upon the Gospel in their mother tongue.²⁹ And yet," he remarks, "men will not suffer it that the laity should know the Gospel, and read it in their common life in humility and love." Hereupon he continues word for word as follows:—"But pleasure-loving learned men of this world reply and say, laymen may easily fall into error, and therefore they ought not to dispute upon questions of Christian faith. Alas! alas! what cruelty it is to rob a whole kingdom of bodily food because a few fools may be gluttonous, and may do themselves and others mischief by their immoderate use of such food.³⁰ Quite as easily may a proud worldly priest fall into error contrary to the Gospel which is written in Latin, as a simple layman may err contrary to the Gospel which is written in English. When a child makes a slip in his first day's lesson, would there be any sense in making that a reason for never allowing children to come to lessons at all? Who then in this way of it would ever become a scholar? What sort of Antichrist is this who, to the sorrow of Christian men, is so bold as to prohibit the laity from learning this holy lesson which is so earnestly commanded by God? Every man is bound to learn it that he may be saved, but every layman who shall be saved is a

very priest of God's own making, and every man is bound to be a very priest.³¹

To *gether*

But worldly priests cry out that Holy Scripture in the English tongue would set Christians by the ears, and would drive subjects into rebellion against their rulers; and therefore it should not be suffered among the laity. Woes me! how can they more manifestly blaspheme God, the Author of peace, and His holy law, which everywhere teaches humility, patience, and brotherly love? So the false Jews, especially the high-priests, and scribes, and Pharisees accused Christ of breeding contention among the people. O Jesus Christ! Thou who didst suffer death to establish thy law and to redeem Christian souls, put a stop to these blasphemies of Antichrist and worldly priests. Help that Thy holy Gospel may be known and held fast by Thy simple brethren, and cause them to grow in faith and hope, in love and humility and patience, and with joy to suffer death for Thee and for Thy law. Amen! Lord Jesu, for Thy mercy sake!"

they are God.

I repeat, these are through and through genuine thoughts of Wiclid, spoken with godly warmth in his own simple but sharp and original style. The whole preface is nothing else than a pleading for the translation of the Gospel into English, and for its diffusion among the laity. And if this preface was written properly for the translation of the Gospel Harmony, it lets us see that at that date, whatever that date was, Wiclid had already grasped the idea, "the Bible for the people!" At the same time, this theological vindication of the idea could not fail to lead on to the plan of a *complete* Bible version. It is to be regarded as a kind of temporary substitute for the latter that to that Gospel Harmony in English there was added an appendix containing

first portions of the Catholic epistles, and then selected extracts from other parts of the Bible. This collection presents variations in the different manuscripts in bulk, and also in the arrangement of the several pieces.³² In how far, however, this appendix is the work of Wiclid, it has not hitherto been possible to ascertain.

The second half of the fourteenth century produced another work of the same kind which is well worthy of attention, viz., a complete translation of all the epistles of Paul, in which the Latin and English follow each other paragraph by paragraph, or even verse by verse, in such a way that along with a very literal translation there are interwoven occasional explanations of single terms. The circumstance, however, that the full Latin text always stands first is a clear proof that the work could not have been prepared for the people, but rather for the less educated class of priests.³³

All the writings hitherto mentioned were preparatory labours by which the proper landing-place to which they all tended was more and more nearly reached, viz., a pure and at the same time a complete English version of the whole Bible.

SECTION III.—*The Wiclid Translation.*

THE New Testament was naturally translated first. Luther followed the same order nearly 150 years later. But the main difference in the two cases was that Luther translated from the Greek original, Wiclid from the Latin of the Vulgate. There is no need to prove this latter fact. Wiclid had no knowledge of Greek, and everywhere it is Latin, not Greek, which is spoken of as the language out of which the

version is made. That the translation of the New Testament was Wiclid's own work we may assume with a good degree of certainty, for this is the point upon which the testimonies of friends and foes, as given above, most undoubtedly agree. If Huss speaks of the whole Bible as translated by Wiclid, we shall yet find immediately that a great part of the Old Testament was done by one of his friends, and our attention is thus directed chiefly to the New Testament as Wiclid's part of the work. And if Knighton speaks of "the Gospel," and "the Evangelical Pearl," the reference here is of course primarily to the New Testament. Add to this that there is a close resemblance of expression and style in the Gospels as compared with the other parts of the New Testament. The whole version has the appearance of being one casting. *Touch someone today*

Prefaces are attached to the several Books. These, however, are not original productions, but merely translations of the same prologues which usually precede the different books of Scripture in the manuscripts of the Vulgate of the fourteenth century. Whether these prefaces were translated by the same hand as the text has not been ascertained; and there is some reason to suppose that they were not attached to the text at first, but were added afterwards—at least they are wanting in some manuscripts in the Gospels, and in other copies in the other books. Not unfrequently short explanations of words are admitted into the text. The different manuscripts, however, of this original version of the New Testament vary considerably from one another, as the Biblical text in several of them has undergone a considerable number of corrections and changes.

The execution of the Old Testament of the work was taken in hand either while the New Testament was still in

progress, or shortly after the completion of the latter,—and this not by Wiclif himself, but by one of his friends and fellow-labourers. The original manuscript of this part of the work, remarkably enough, has been preserved.³⁴ A second manuscript, which was copied from this one before undergoing correction, contains a remark which ascribes the translation to Nicolas of Hereford; and this remark, which was manifestly added no long time after, is worthy of full credit. Now, it is a peculiar circumstance that both these manuscripts break off quite unexpectedly in the middle of a sentence,—namely, in the Book of Baruch, cap. 3, v. 20,³⁵—a fact which can only be explained by the supposition that the writer was suddenly interrupted in the work. And this supposition admits of being combined, without any pressure, with the fact attested by existing documents, that Nicolas of Hereford, Doctor of Theology, and one of the leaders of the Wiclif party in 1382, after a sermon preached by him before the University on Ascension day, was cited, in June of that year, to appear before a Provincial Synod in London, to answer for his teaching on that occasion.

The result of his examination was that on 1st July sentence of excommunication was passed upon him. Against this sentence he appealed to the Pope, and, according to Knighton's Chronicle, went in person to Rome to prosecute his appeal, but was there thrown into prison, in which he remained for some years, when he was at length discharged, and returned to England.³⁶ It is easy, therefore, to understand how Nicolas of Hereford came to be so suddenly interrupted in the middle of his work, and as it was impossible for him to carry on the work for several years, the fragment remained as it was when he was unexpectedly compelled to lay down his pen.

If these combinations and conjectures rest upon any good ground, they furnish us at the same time with the advantage of a fixed date ; for supposing the above facts to be correct, we shall then be able to assume with some confidence that in June 1382, at the latest, the translation of the New Testament by Wiclif's own hand must have been completed, if his fellow-labourer Hereford had already in the Old Testament advanced as far as the Apocrypha and was now in the middle of the Book of Baruch. The version itself affords proof that it was continued and finished by another hand ; and it is not improbable that the continuator was Wiclif himself. From Baruch iii. 20 the style is one characteristically different from Hereford's, as we shall have occasion to show in the sequel. The prologues to the books of the Old Testament, as in the case of the New Testament, are only a version of those which were then commonly found in the manuscripts of the Vulgate. For the most part they consist of letters and other pieces of Jerome.

Touch someone now

It must have been a heartfelt joy and deep satisfaction for Wiclif when the translation of the whole Bible was completed, and the great plan accomplished which he had so long cherished and pushed forward with so warm a zeal. This in all probability took place in the year 1382. But Wiclif was not the man to betake himself to rest in any single object attained by him, and least of all in this sacred cause. To him the translation of the Bible was not its own end, but only a means to an end, that end being to put the Bible into the hands of his own countrymen, to bring home the Word of God to the hearts of the English people. His next care, therefore, after the translation was ready, was to make it as useful as possible. For this purpose copies of it were now made, and in such a way that not only the whole

Bible, but also portions of it, and even single books, were copied out and circulated. Moreover, in many of these copies there were inserted a table of the Bible lectures for Sundays and all the feast and fast days of the ecclesiastical year, which table is still to be found in several of the existing manuscripts. And in order to put these lectures into the hands of many at a cheap price, books were also copied out which contained no more than these gospels and epistles. Of this sort are two manuscripts still remaining, which were written at all events before the close of the fourteenth century.

But a still more important work became necessary. As soon as the English Bible was complete and came into use, the imperfections which clung to it began to be manifest; and in truth it was not to be wondered at that the work should have considerable blemishes. It was a work of uncommon magnitude, especially for that time, considering that it was executed under unfavourable circumstances by different hands, and without any firm basis of clear and consistent principles of translation having been previously laid down. The portion executed by Hereford, embracing the Old Testament books, had a character of its own, differing much from Wiclif's version of the New Testament in its method of translation, and in the form of its English idiom. These and other blemishes could not escape the notice at least of Wiclif himself. And without doubt it was he who suggested a revision of the whole work, perhaps undertook it with his own hand. Just as Luther, too, after his complete German Bible appeared in 1534, began ere long to revise it, and never ceased till his death to improve and polish it, partly by his own hand and partly with the assistance of Melancthon, Bugenhagen, Cruciger, and others. No marvel

if the case was not otherwise with the English Bible of the fourteenth century. *Touch them with*

The revision was a work of time. Wiclif did not live to see it completed. The revised Wiclif Bible did not appear till several years after his death, and the improved form which it now assumed was essentially the work of one man who was a trusted friend of Wiclif, and in his last years his assistant in parochial work, John Purvey. This fact has been made not merely probable but certain by the learned editors of the Wiclif versions of the Bible, who have also shown that the probable date of the completion of the revision was the year 1388—*i.e.*, four years after Wiclif's death.³⁷ Before the appearance of the collected edition of the Wiclif translations just referred to, very confused and mistaken ideas of the oldest English versions of the Bible prevailed. Not to speak of the already-mentioned and now exploded assertion of Sir Thomas More, that long before Wiclif's day there were already in existence complete translations of the Bible in English, it was a common error, since Lewis's day down to 1848, to take the older translation of Wiclif for the later revised one, and to take the later for the older, *i.e.*, for the genuine or unrevised work of Wiclif. More than this, down to the year 1848, no part of the older translation had appeared *in print*, with the exception of the Song of Songs, which Dr. Adam Clark had printed in his Bible Commentary from a manuscript in his own possession.³⁸ The fact that the older genuine Wiclif translation had had the fate of being so long ignored is closely connected with the circumstance that it had been thrown into the shade and almost entirely superseded by the later improved version. For the later form of the text of the translation was eagerly sought after. Copies of it came into the hands of people be-

longing to all classes of society. These copies must have been multiplied with extraordinary rapidity, for even at the present day there are still about 150 manuscripts remaining which contain Purvey's revised version either in whole or in part, and the majority of these copies were executed within forty years after the year 1388. *your mind*

It would, however, be extremely short-sighted and hasty if we should undervalue or entirely overlook the work of Wiclif by reason of Purvey's work. Was, then, Purvey's Bible translation anything more than a uniformly executed revision of Wiclif's work already published, and an edition of it improved, in point of language, in respect to its superior legibility? The revision was, indeed, carried through in a consistent manner under the guidance of distinctly conceived principles, but this was a work of far less difficulty than the task of originating the translation itself, especially when we consider the grandeur and the novelty of the first idea of the work, and the tenacious persistency and steady industry which were absolutely required for its execution. Last of all, we point again to the probability before referred to—that it was Wiclif himself who was first sensible of the need of a revision of the finished translation; so that it was only the carrying out of the task which fell to Purvey, whose relative merits, however, we have no wish to undervalue. *through*

What, now, is the peculiar character and importance of the earlier version, in so far especially as it was Wiclif's personal work? Its peculiarity becomes clearer to the eye when we compare the New Testament in the older version with the Old Testament as rendered by Hereford. Hereford's translation is excessively literal, and keeps as close as possible, almost pedantically, to the Latin expression

and order of the Vulgate. This makes the version very often stiff and awkward, forced and obscure. The translator kept only the original in his eye, which it was his wish to render with the utmost possible fidelity; on the spirit and laws of the English tongue he seems scarcely to have bestowed a thought, and as little on the qualities of intelligibility and legibility which it was his business to impart to the translated text. The case is quite different with Wiclid in the books which he translated, and above all in the New Testament. He ever keeps in view the spirit of his mother tongue and the requirements of English readers, so that the translation is so simple as to be thoroughly readable. Nay more, it is a remarkable fact that Wiclid's English style in his Bible-translation, compared with his other English writings, rises to an uncommon pitch of perspicuity, beauty, and force.³⁹ *your body*

But if we compare Wiclid's Bible, not with his own English writings, but with English literature in general before and after his time, a still more important result is revealed. Wiclid's translation of the Bible marks an epoch in the development of the English language almost as much as Luther's translation does in the history of the German tongue. The Luther Bible opens the period of the new High German; Wiclid's Bible stands at the head of the Middle English. It is usual, indeed, to represent not Wiclid, but Chaucer—the father of English poetry—as the first representative of the Middle English literature. But later investigators of the history of languages—such as Marsh, Koch, and others—rightly recognise Wiclid's Bible prose as the earliest classic Middle English.] Chaucer, indeed, has some rare features of superiority—liveliness of description, a charming way of clothing his ideas, genuine

1 English humour, and a masterly command of language. But such qualities of style address themselves more to the educated classes—they are not adapted to make a form of speech the common property of the nation. That which has the destiny to promulgate a new language must be something which concerns closely the weal and the woe of man, and which for that reason takes hold irresistibly of every man in a nation, the lowest as well as the highest. In other words, it must be moral and religious truths, grasped with the energy of a genuine enthusiasm, and finding acceptance and diffusion for themselves in fresh forms of speech. If Luther, with his translation of the Bible, opened the epoch of the High German dialect, so Wiclif, with his English Bible, stands side by side with Chaucer at the head of the Middle English. But in the latter dialect are already found the fundamental characters of the new English, which reached its development in the sixteenth century. *and lose them*

Please
do this for me.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VII.

1. Thom. More, *Dyalogues*, fol. cviii. cxi. cxiv.
2. *Treatise of the Corruption of Scripture*, Lond., 1612, p. 74. *Vide* Forshall and Madden's *Wycliffite Versions of the Bible*, VI., p. xxi.
3. *Historia Dogmatica Controversiae de Scripturis et Sacris Vernaculis*. Lond. 1690, 4to, p. 155.
4. *Auctorium Historiae Dogmaticae J. Usserii*, p. 424.
5. H. Wharton (under the pseudonym Ant. Harmer), *Specimens of Errors in the History of the Reformation*. Lond., 1693. *Vide* Vaughan, John de Wycliffe, 334, Note I.
6. *Wycliffite Versions of the Bible*, I. Pref. xxi. lvii.
7. Do. I., p. xxi., Note 9.
8. Printed at the time of the Reformation as *A compendious olde treatyse shewyng how that we ought to have the Scripture in Englyshe*. *Vide* *Wycliffite Versions*, I. Pref. xxxiii., Note, and xxi., Note 9.
9. Max Müller, *Lectures on the Science of Language*. Leipzig, 1863, I., p. 349, Note. C. Friedrich Koch, *Histortsche Grammatik der Englischen Sprache*, I., p. 8.
10. The only MS. of these Poems, dating from the tenth century, and belonging to the Bodleian Library, does not name the author. Francis Junius, who published the first edition of the Paraphrase in 1655, in Amsterdam, was the first to put forth the conjecture that Caedmon was the author. New editions have been brought out by Benjamin Thorpe, Lond. 1832, and by Bouterwek, Elberfeld, 1849.
11. Cuthberti Vita Bedae.
12. Namely, the so-called Durham book and the Rushworth Gloss in the Bodleian.
13. Reuss, *Revue de Théologie*, II. 3; Les bibliothèques de la seule ville de Paris contiennent plus de manuscrits bibliques français que toutes les bibliothèques d'Outre Rhin ne paraissent en contenir d'allemands.
14. Called *Ormulum*, after the author, whose name was either Orm or Ormin, and who was an Augustinian Canon. Edited, with Notes and Glossary, by Wright, Oxford University Press, 1852, 2 vols. 8vo.
15. The Story of Genesis and Exodus, an early English song, about A.D. 1250. Edited by Richard Morris for the Early English Tract Society. 1865.

16. For our first reliable information concerning the person and life of this remarkable man we are indebted to the documents published by Mr. Perry in the preface to the English Prose Treatises of Richard Rolle de Hampole. Lond., 1866, p. xv. f. *Vide Legenda de Vita Ricardi Rolle*, preserved in the Cathedral Library of Lincoln. According to these he was born at Thornton, in Yorkshire, studied at Oxford, and returned home in his nineteenth year, where he immediately took to a hermit's life. Later in life he laboured as an itinerant preacher in the northern parts of Yorkshire, and he closed his life in Hampole in 1349.

17. *Wyclifite Versions of the Bible*, VI., Pref. iv. f. At all events one such remark drawn from a single MS. is not sufficient to support the conjecture made by Humphrey Wanley that this translation of the Psalms in its shortest form was a juvenile work of Wyclif himself.

18. *Wycliffite Versions*, etc., Pref. v. and vi., and particularly Note 1. All the preceding statements regarding the Bible translations which were anterior to Wyclif rest upon the learned investigations of the editors of the Wyclif Bible, found in their preface.

19. Henricus Knighton, *Chronica de Eventibus Angliae* in Twysden's *Historiae Anglicae Scriptores*, X. Lond., 1652. Col. 2644, *Hic magister Joannes Wyclif Evangelium quod Christus contulit clericis et Ecclesiae Doctoribus, ut ipsi laicis et infirmioribus personis secundum temporis exigentiam et personarum indigentiam cum mentis eorum esurie dulciter ministrarent, transtulit de Latino in Anglicam linguam non Angelicam; unde per ipsum fit vulgare, et magis apertum laicis et mulieribus legere scientibus, quam solet esse clericis admodum literatis et bene intelligentibus, et sic evangelica margarita spargitur et a porcis conculeatur*, etc.

20. Wilkins, *Concilia Magnae Britanniae*, III., f. 350, Joannes Wyclif—et ipsam ecclesiae sacrosanctae fidem et doctrinam sanctissimam totis conatibus impugnare studuit, novae ad suae malitiae complementum Scripturarum in linguam maternam translationis practica adinventa, etc.

21. Replica contra Jo. Stokes. Quod autem Wycliff non fuit Teutonicus sed Anglicus, patet ex suis scriptis—nam per Anglicos dicitur quod ipse tota Biblia transtulit ex Latino in Anglicum.

22. *Wyclifite Versions*, I., Pref., p. viii.

23. Catalogue of the Original Works of J. W., p. 36.

24. *Wyclifite Versions* as above, Note Z.

25. Do. I., Preface, p. ix., Note d. The words run thus:—*Herfore a pore caityf lettid fro prechynge for a tyme for causes knownun of God*, etc.

26. Arnold in his Introduction to the First Volume of Wyclif's English Sermons, p. 5, concludes against the Wyclif authorship of this Commentary on partly the same grounds as those upon which I had come to the same conclusion some years before; only he conjectures that its true author may have been a Monk.

27. *Herfor a symple creature of God writeth a schort gloss in English*, etc.

28. *Wyclifite Versions*, I., Preface, pp. ix., x., and particularly Note f. “One that I suppose veraly was God's servant, seyand to me that sethyn the gospelle is

rewle, be the whilk ich Cristen man owes to lyf—ilk man that is in the grace of God—owes hertely to bysy him.

29. It is to be regarded as a quite peculiar merit of the Editors of the Wiclif translations of the Bible that they have given in the Preface so rich an anthology of extracts from English manuscripts. One of the most valuable of these communications, in my opinion, is the second preface, printed in full from two MSS., to the English translation of the Gospel-harmony of Clemens, in vol. I., p. xiv., col. 2, and p. xv., col. 1. The sentence last quoted in our text is worded in the original, thus—*Cristen men are moche to traveile nyght and day aboute text of holy writ, and namely the gospel in her moder tunge.*

30. Here “unmesurabli” is to be read according to the other MS., not “mesurabli” which the editors have preferred.

31. *Wycliffite Versions*, vol. I., p. xv., col. 1. *Thanne each lewed man that schal be saved is a real prest maad of God, and eche man is bounden to be suche a verri prest. But worldly clerkis crien that holy writ in English wole make Cristen men at debate, and therfor it schal not be suffred among lewed men.*

32. Wycliffite Versions of the Bible, v. I., XI. XII.

33. Do. do. v. I., p. xiii. In an English tract, which may well have come from Wiclif’s pen, p. xiv., Note, it is expressly said that “as the parish priests are often so ignorant that they do not understand Latin books so as to be able to instruct the people, it is necessary not only for the ignorant people, but also for the ignorant priests, to have books in the English language containing the necessary instruction for the ignorant people.”

34. It is preserved in the Bodleian Library, No. 959 (3093), and is distinguished by the circumstance that very often alterations are made in the middle of a sentence; not unfrequently a word has been cancelled as soon as it was written, or before it was written fully, in order to put another in its place. *Wycliffite Versions*, I., p. xvii. and xlviij.

35. The second MS. is in the Bodleian, marked *Douce 369*, and ends with the words, *and oþyr men in the place of him risen. The Yunge.* Then on the next side stands written by another but contemporary hand, *Explicit translacion Nicholay herford*, v. I., p. xvii. and l., where a *facsimile* of these words with the preceding lines is given.

36. *Fasc. Zizan.*, ed. Shirley, p. 289 f. *Knighton Chronica.*, col. 2656 f.

37. To have established this fact, and brought clear light into the manifold darkness which rested upon these subjects, is one of the numerous merits of these two men who, with the liberal support of the delegates of the University Press of Oxford, carried on their investigations for twenty-two years long, made a thorough search of the most important public and private libraries of Great Britain and Ireland, and on the basis of a critical comparison of numerous MSS. published the earlier as well as the later translations, along with prefaces. The work has this title, *The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, with the Apocryphal books, in the earliest English versions made from the Latin vulgate by John Wycliffe and his followers; edited by the Rev. Josiah Forshall, F.R.S., and Sir Frederic*

Madden, K.H., F.R.S., *Keeper of the Manuscripts in the British Museum.* Oxford University Press, 1850, 4 vols. large 4to, with a copious Preface in vol. I. (from which we have drawn much of what we have given above), and a Glossary to these translations in vol. IV. The two translations are throughout printed side by side in double columns—the older to the left, the later to the right. The various readings are given in Notes.

38. Henry Wharton, in the *Auctarium to Usher's Historia—controversiae—de Scripturis et sacris vernaculis*, London, 1690, p. 424 f., had rightly perceived which was the older and which the later translation, and while rightly attributing the older to Wyclif, had incorrectly assigned the later to John of Trevisa. Dr. Waterland had come to see that the Translation, with the "General Preface" to the Bible, was the work of John Purvey; but he had not held fast to this view, and had even fallen back to the old opinion that the later Recension was the earlier. He was followed in this by John Lewis, Wyclif's first Biographer, when he published, on the basis of two MSS., the later translation of the New Testament as the work of Wyclif—*New Testament, translated out of the Latin Vulgate, by John Wyclif, about 1378.* Lond., 1731, fol. This same translation has been twice printed in the present century—in 1810, by H. H. Baker, *New Testament, translated from the Latin, in the year 1380, by John Wyclif, D.D.*; and in 1841 upon the basis of one MS. in Bagster's English Hexapla, 4to (*The Bible Translations of Wyclif, Tyndale, Cranmer, and others*). On the other hand, the New Testament in the older translation was first published in 1848 by Lea Wilson, after a MS. in his own possession, under the title *The New Testament in English, translated by John Wycliffe, circa 1380.* Lond. 4to. Last of all, Rev. Josiah Forshall and Sir Frederick Madden gave to the world the Two Translations of the whole Bible, with critical exactness, in the work already mentioned.

39. This remark was first made by Sharon Turner in his *History of England during the Middle Ages.* 1830. Vol. V. p. 425 f. Comp. p. 447 f.

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